

## Nominations open Jan. 4 for Governor's Arts Awards

The 2016 Governor's Arts Awards program will open for nominations beginning Monday, Jan. 4.

The Governor's Arts Awards program honors outstanding citizens and organizations in Montana whose significant achievements in the arts, or on behalf of the arts, benefit all Montanans.

Anyone or any organization in Montana with commensurate accomplishments can be nominated for the Governor's Arts Awards. (Awards are not given posthumously.) The Governor of the State of Montana presents the awards through the Montana Arts Council.

- Information about how to nominate a candidate for the 2016 Governor's Arts Awards will be available on MAC's website, [www.art.mt.gov](http://www.art.mt.gov), beginning Jan. 4.

- Nominations and all support materials must be submitted by March 31, 2016.

- The awards ceremony is slated for early December 2016.

The paperless process requires nominators to submit all materials online and nominations will be managed via email. Online forms and support materials that were submitted on behalf of nominees endorsed during past awards cycles may be available to nominators who wish to use them to update a nomination for the 2016 cycle.

If a nominator would like to access past information, please contact Cinda Holt at the Montana Arts Council, [cholt@mt.gov](mailto:cholt@mt.gov) or 406-777-0090.

## New year brings major transitions for MAC

Arni Fishbaugh to retire in September and Carleen Layne to retire in April

By Arni Fishbaugh, Executive Director

For many years the Montana Arts Council's accountant Carleen Layne and I promised each other that when we retired we'd do so at the same time. We then came to our senses and realized that this was not the wisest move for the agency.

So, we're putting a six-month window in between our departure dates, with Carleen's retirement set for April and mine for Sept. 30, 2016.

### Executive Director search

The executive director of the Montana Arts Council reports to the members of the council, and as such, the council has the responsibility for hiring the new director.

The Montana Arts Council will open a national search in mid-January to fill the position. All applicants will need to apply through the Montana state employment website at [statecareers.mt.gov](http://statecareers.mt.gov). The position will be posted mid-January through early May.



Arlynn Fishbaugh

The council has developed a search committee that will review applications, and plans to conduct preliminary interviews with semi-finalist candidates in late May or June and interview finalists in-person in July. The new director will take the position in early October.

### Accountant search

It will be very difficult to replace Carleen Layne. For the last 37 years she also served as the deputy director and covers many other bases in addition to her accounting duties. We have opened her position on the state's Job Service listing, and we will look to fill this position to enable several weeks of cross-over training between Carleen and the new accountant.

The legislative fiscal auditor told us that, although our agency is small, Carleen's role as our accountant is one of the most complicated. She leaves very big shoes to fill in so many areas.



Carleen Layne

See Arni's Addendum on page 2

## Michael Earl Craig named Poet Laureate

Gov. Steve Bullock appointed Livingston writer Michael Earl Craig as Montana's next Poet Laureate in October.

"Through his writing he has captured the attention of readers for years," said Gov. Bullock. "And through his mentorship of students pursuing creative writing, he has inspired the next generation of poets and novelists."

The Montana Poet Laureate is a two-year honorary position created by the State Legislature in 2005 and administered by the Montana Arts Council. Craig takes over from outgoing Poet Laureate Tami Haaland. He will serve through Aug. 1, 2017.



Michael Earl Craig

(Photo by Susan Thomas)

Craig is the author of four books of poetry: *Can You Relax in My House* (2002), *Yes, Master* (2006), *Thin Kimono* (2010) and *Talkativeness* (2014). His work has been included in the anthologies *Isn't It Romantic* (2004), *Everyman's Library Poems About Horses* (2009), and *The Best American Poetry* (2014).

A farrier who composes his poetry on a manual typewriter and mentors creative writing students at Livingston's Park High School, Craig has been invited to read in cities all over the country, has seen his poetry translated into Dutch and Chinese, and has received national accolades.

See Poet Laureate on page 2

## The Wilma reborn Historic Missoula theater brought back to life

By Kristi Niemeyer

Two months after The Wilma reopened in downtown Missoula, owner Nick Checota was still basking (albeit a busy bask) in accolades from fans and musicians.

The hum of social media delivers the same message over and over again, he says. "People love the space."

The band Big Gigantic "told us it was the best room in the country." Other nationally touring bands have declared the grand old theater "as good as it gets."

"When you're trying to attract musicians to a single venue that's somewhat remote you have to make the room something special, so that when they leave, they rave about it."

That's starting to happen, he added. "Word is spreading pretty quickly."

Upcoming shows include Lyle Lovett with Robert Earl Keen, the psychedelic funk band Lettuce, singer/songwriter Grace Potter, Yonder Mountain String Band and rock band Dr. Dog.



Nick Checota in The Wilma, a week before the theater's grand opening in early October.

(Photo by Brian Kopper)

See Wilma Reborn on page 8

## VIBE: Bringing the world to Montana

Enlightenment and entertainment join forces when Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre hosts the U.S. round of the prestigious Vienna International Ballet Experience (VIBE), Jan. 12-16 in Missoula. Dancers from all over the world arrive in the Garden City for five days of rigorous competition, as well as master classes, concerts and an international symposium.

"Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre sees hosting VIBE as an enormous opportunity to forward its mission of diplomacy through dance," says Artistic Director Charlene Campbell Carey. "This festival of cultural events is an unprecedented opportunity to meet and mix with dancers and diplomats without leaving Montana."

A heavy-hitting line-up of world-renowned jury members is headed to Missoula for this historic event, which has never been held on U.S. soil.

The jury includes legendary prima ballerinas, world-class choreographers, and the leaders of some of the most renowned dance schools around the world.

"After nearly two decades of taking the Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre around the world, we are proud to be bringing the international ballet community to the Rockies," said Campbell.

See VIBE on page 5





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### Sign up for MAC's eNews

Between the quarterly issues of the *State of the Arts*, our staff publishes four separate e-newsletters with opportunities and information:

- Artists' email newsletter
- Arts Educators' email newsletter
- Arts Organizations' email newsletter
- Public Artists' email newsletter

If you'd like to sign-up for one or more of these, please offer us your contact information and what you'd like to receive at: [art.mt.gov/resources/resources\\_soasubscribe.asp](mailto:art.mt.gov/resources/resources_soasubscribe.asp) or send us an email at: [mac@mt.gov](mailto:mac@mt.gov).

## ARNI'S ADDENDUM

**Arlynn Fishbaugh, Executive Director**  
afishbaugh@mt.gov

### Kristin Burgoyne to serve as Deputy Director

Kristin Han Burgoyne, our grants and database director, will assume Carleen's deputy-director duties, which include political, legislative and policy arenas. Kristin has had solid experience in many facets of the agency, having done numerous jobs during her 17-year tenure here. Especially helpful will be her experience testifying in front of legislative committees and knowing how to maneuver through the intricacies, quirks and red flags of the political environment in which we live.

She has been involved in all of the agency's advocacy efforts in recent years. It is important that the deputy director reside in Helena, too, because that is the agency's base of operation. Carleen and I have been purposeful in structuring Kristin's duties during the past several years to include "Deputy-in-Training" roles, so this transition will happen smoothly.

### Agency strength lives in many

Since taking this job in 1992, I know for sure that the arts council's strength does not reside in one, or even several people. It lies in the intrinsic leadership of ALL of its current and former staff, board and advocates across the state.

The agency is also vigorous because of the genuine, authentic and meaningful relationships we have with the many faces of the Montana public we serve. We listen, we

learn and we try to make sure what we do each day is relevant and valuable to Montanans.

We've been there. We care. And we try to do our best. We have courage and tenacity, and we're not partisan.

We would not even be here were it not for the efforts of the Montana Cultural Advocacy and its chairman Paul Stahl of Helena. He has led the arts advocacy efforts for the agency for decades. There are no words that can aptly describe his value to the arts in the state.

Throughout the years, Paul and the lobbying efforts of the Montana Cultural Advocacy have seen us through countless storms and successes. Lobbyists who have worked for the Cultural Advocacy during my tenure include Gloria Hermanson, Keith Colbo, Chuck Hunter, Jackie Lenmark and Drew Geiger. All did incredible work. Thanks, too, to John Barsness of Mon-



MAC staff rubs elbows with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) leaders during a recent confab. Shown from left to right: NEA State and Regional Director Laura Scanlan, Arni Fishbaugh, NEA State and Regional Specialist Andi Mathis, Cinda Holt, NASAA CEO and President Pam Breaux, Kristin Han Burgoyne and NEA Chairman Jane Chu.

(Photo by George Long Photography, [georgelong.com](http://georgelong.com))

tana Arts, the nonprofit arts organization in Bozeman that houses the Cultural Advocacy.

So, to all I say "thank you" for helping the Montana Arts Council weave such a strong pattern into the fabric of Montana. The logo for our agency was designed with this thought in

mind ... many fibers woven together into a circle of all Montanans. When you see that logo, I hope you know that you are one of those threads that helps make us so strong.



## NEA 50th Anniversary Initiative: Creativity Connects

The National Endowment for the Arts is celebrating its 50th anniversary. It was on Sept. 29, 1965, that President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act which gave birth to the NEA and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

To mark this milestone, National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu launched a year-long anniversary celebration that demonstrates how the NEA advances learning, fuels creativity, and celebrates arts engagement.

The major initiative of the 50th anniversary is Creativity Connects, which investigates how artist practices and support systems are changing, how the arts do and can connect with other sectors via creativity. The NEA will develop a digital systems map that lays the groundwork for future investments in the arts.

### Other new programs

**Songwriting Challenge:** The NEA is partnering with Playbill, Inc. and Disney Theatrical Group to develop a pilot songwriting program that will provide an avenue for high school composers and lyricists to both showcase and refine their songwriting talents.

**Poetry Ourselves:** The NEA is also encouraging the talent and creativity of young people by adding a new element to the annual Poetry Out Loud competition. In addition to reciting published poems by other poets, Poetry Ourselves will give each of the state champions the opportunity to submit an original poem, which will be judged separately from their recitations in the national finals.

**Imagine Your Parks:** In November, the NEA announced the first round of grants awarded for this special anniversary program that supports the arts that take place in, or were inspired by, our national parks.

### Anniversary stories

Throughout the coming year, the NEA will post new multimedia content on the NEA's website, [arts.gov](http://arts.gov), that showcases the impact of the arts, including:

- More than 60 videos highlighting the role the arts play in every U.S. state, district, territory, and region (look for Montana's video and stories here).

- A dozen milestone videos detailing key grants in the history of the National Endowment for the Arts.

- Crowd-sourced stories about how the arts and the National Endowment for the Arts have impacted the lives of Americans.

The website also offers audio and video stories from luminaries, an interactive 50-year timeline, a suite of static and motion graphics, the fall issue of NEA Arts devoted to stories of its grantees, and a collection of fact sheets.

## Poet Laureate (from page 1)

"Michael Earl Craig may be my favorite poet writing today," notes Amanda Fortini, a writer for *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *Rolling Stone*. "The deadpan humor of his poems (and his in-person readings) is what makes his work so unique – accessible but ultimately mysterious – and so beloved of readers all across the country."

Craig grew up in Dayton, and was educated at Ohio Wesleyan University, The University of Montana, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. According to the Poetry Foundation, his poems question the assumptions and habits of daily life, using humor and frequent glimpses of a skewed pastoral landscape.

"His poems are hilarious, but not without stoicism; absurd but not indulgently so; hidden and insane but not without affection," notes critic John Deming in a *Coldfront* review of *Yes, Master*.

Upon his 2003 inclusion in the Poetry Society of America's New American Poetry Series, Craig stated, "I don't think you get to choose the direction you go in. Not really. You interpret lumps in the sandbox the same way now as you did when you were five. All one can do is drift – or gravitate, if that's easier – back toward – or go, one could simply go – back toward the very inner self, which was there, intact, at the outset."

The Montana Poet Laureate position recognizes and honors a citizen poet of exceptional talent and accomplishment, while encouraging appreciation of poetry and literary life in Montana. Sandra Alcosser became the state's first Montana Poet Laureate in 2005; the list also includes Greg Pape, Henry Real Bird, Sheryl Noethe and Tami Haaland.

### In the Road

By Michael Earl Craig

I had a dream last night, I dreamt  
I was trying to shoe a horse in the road. I'd  
get under him and swing my hammer and  
he'd move his foot, just a little. Hitting the  
nails was like trying to strike flies  
from the air. My hammer flashed in the sun,  
striking the shoe to the left or the right of the nail.  
One miss-hit busted my thumb open.  
Blood trickled like a wet glove over my hand.  
I cursed as he hopped around on three legs,  
a totally blank expression on his face.  
Occasionally a car came down the road, slowly,  
carving a wide arc around us, the passengers  
with their windows rolled up, looking silently  
out at me, sometimes shaking their heads.  
I'd swing and miss. Then swing and hit my thumb.  
Finally I swung, he shifted his foot, and my hammer  
hit my kneecap with some amazing velocity.  
I crumpled to the ground like a worn-out flag.  
This horse just stood there, expressionless.  
Another car passed by, very close to me.  
A child in the backseat cracked her window a bit.  
She held out a banana and pretended to shoot me  
in the head. She silently mouthed the word *pop*  
twice—*pop, pop*—and I felt myself twitch sharply  
in my bed. I knew I could wake up if I wanted to,  
but it just wasn't my style.

— From *Thin Kimono*

## STATE OF THE ARTS

*State of the Arts* is published four times a year by the Montana Arts Council and produced by *Lively Times*.

*State of the Arts* welcomes submissions of photographs, press releases and newsworthy information from individual artists and arts organizations.

Please check with the Montana Arts Council for reprint permission.

**2016 Deadlines:** The deadlines for submissions are March 1 for the April-June issue; June 1 for the July-September issue; and Sept. 1 for the October-December issue. Send items to: Montana Arts Council, PO Box 202201, Helena, MT 59620-2201; phone 406-444-6430, fax 406-444-6548 or email [mac@mt.gov](mailto:mac@mt.gov).

**Subscriptions:** *State of the Arts* is available free of charge to Montana residents as a public service of the Montana Arts Council. To subscribe, call 406-444-6430, or update or sign-up online at [www.art.mt.gov](http://www.art.mt.gov). Out-of-state subscriptions are \$15 per year; mail your check to Montana Arts Council, PO Box 202201, Helena, MT 59620.



## CONGRATS TO ...



Scene from "Winter Light," based on a story by James Lee Burke.

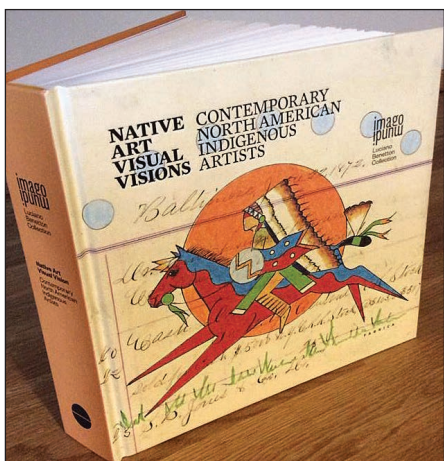
The makers of "Winter Light," a short adaptation of a **James Lee Burke** story, which has made the final 10 list for the 2015 Academy Award for live action short films; the five nominees will be announced Jan. 14. The movie was directed by **Julian Higgins**, a young director who won a 2011 Student Academy Award; he adapted the story himself and raised money online to shoot in Burke's home territory. It was shot on film in the Missoula area in winter 2014, including scenes on The University of Montana campus, in the Jocko Valley and at Accu-Arms, a gun dealership on South Third Street West. "It's a tremendous honor that 'Winter Light' has been selected to the shortlist," Higgins wrote in an email to the *Missoulian*. "We never could have predicted this. It's the furthest thing from your mind when you're making a movie, especially knee-deep in snow in Jocko Canyon in a blizzard at midnight in February. It has been an incredible journey to this point, and I know I speak for the entire team when I say we are just so grateful." The movie was produced by TV and film actor Josh Pence and co-produced by Abigail Spencer, and stars Raymond J. Berry as an isolated and stubborn college professor who enters into an escalating conflict with two hunters, played by Vincent Kartheiser and Pence.

– from the *Missoulian*, Nov. 30

The Montana PBS program "11th & Grant with Eric Funk," which was honored with a 2015 NETA award for an episode featuring Bad Betty Organ Combo. NETA is a public media awards program that evaluates work in production, education, and community engagement alongside that of other peers in public media. For the third year in a row, "11th & Grant with Eric Funk" was judged the best performance program in the PBS system, in any market, of any size. From some of the judges ... "Easily one of the best music television programs I have seen" and "Everything from graphics to lighting to camera angles is first rate." Out of over 300 entries from across the country, only 29 stations were recognized this year. The Bozeman-based program's cast and crew includes **Jeremiah Slovarp, Steve Spence, Eric Funk, Addison Maierhauser, Caroline Janssen, Phil Newman, Scott Sterling, Buff Brown, Chris Cundy, John Sanders** and **Robert Schneeweis**.

**MAPS Media Institute** of Hamilton, which received two 2015 Northwest Regional High School Student Awards for Excellence from The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in Seattle. In the Arts and Entertainment category MAPS won for both student productions – "Darby Rodeo" and "Logger Days." "The MAPS program with Peter Rosten is excellent," NATASNW executive director Diane Bevins told the *Ravalli Republic*. "I marvel at what he has done to help students over the years to just grow ... I work with a lot of people in the television and film industry and some people just have the heart for students." "I'm proud of my group," said MAPS founder and CEO Peter Rosten. "We provide this world and then they rock it year after year – it's quite extraordinary."

**Monte Yellow Bird Sr.**, better known in the art world as Black Pinto Horse, whose original ledger, "In Heaven and On Earth, Star Boy Rides," was included in "Imago Mundi: Map of the New Art," on display Sept. 1-Nov. 1 at Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, Italy, and adorns the exhibit catalogue. The exhibit featured works from more than 40 nations and native peoples representing five continents. His work, "Bobtail Bull, Arikara Scout Gathers Enemy Ponies" was also used as a cover image for the Fall 2015 edition of *Great Plains Research*, a scholarly journal of natural and social sciences published by the Center for Great Plains Studies in Lincoln, NE. "I, Son of the Star, Arikaree Chief, Won These Ponies," was featured in "The Art of the Horse" in the May 2015 issue of *Western Art Collector*; and his painting, "Making Bear Medicine" took first place in the Santa Fe Indian Market, Aug. 21-22.



The catalogue for "Imago Mundi" features cover art by Black Pinto Horse.

Molt artist **Tracy Linder**, whose piece, "Newborn: Wade" was featured in the annual ArtPrize, Sept. 23-Oct. 11 in Grand Rapids, MI. The "independently organized international art competition decided by public vote and expert jury" brings hundreds of thousands of visitors to the city each year.



"Newborn: Wade" by Tracy Linder

Linder was also mentioned in the October/November issue of *Art Ltd.* magazine's Montana Report by Margery Gordon, who describes her work this way: "The cattle, crops and tools Linder molds from organic materials are multiplied in elegiac installations that offer insight on the natural rhythms observed by family farms in contrast to today's agribusiness practices. With work that is both materially and thematically dynamic – and solo shows at venues such as the Missoula Art Museum, Yellowstone Art Museum, the Holter, and the Nicolaysen in Casper, WY – Linder represents an artist whose work is at once cutting-edge, and deeply rooted in the region." Read the Montana Report at [www.artltdmag.com](http://www.artltdmag.com).



The dedication ceremony for Fred Boyer's sculpture, "Dad's Surprise," included (from left): AWARE CEO Larry Noonan, the artist's grandchildren, Meika and Grady, Boyer and Lt. Gov. Angela McLean.

(Photo courtesy of James S. Rosien)

create a sculpture with historical significance for the working people of Montana, as well as personal significance related to his own experience as a grandchild of a smelterman. "As Anacondans, we know what it's like to give of ourselves because we often had nothing else to give," said Lieutenant Governor Angela McLean at the dedication ceremony. "This sculpture represents the hard-working people who built a community." The sculpture is located at the base of the smelter stack at the new location of the AWARE Center for Excellence in Anaconda.

Bozeman artist **Bruce Park**, whose oil painting, "Bridger Mountains – August Storm" was purchased by the Nicolaysen Art Museum in Casper, WY, for its permanent collection. The painting depicts the Gallatin Valley and Bridger mountains at sunset, against a looming thunderstorm. The NIC is a leading center for contemporary arts in the Rocky Mountain region, with a mission to collect, preserve, and exhibit the work of contemporary artists. "We believe contemporary art inspires important discussion about ourselves, and the world in which we all live, building community through a greater understanding and appreciation of each

other. We believe art stimulates the hearts and minds of everyone who comes in contact with it because creativity is an essential element of a joyful life." See more of the artist's work at [www.bruceparkarts.com](http://www.bruceparkarts.com).

Livingston artist **John Banovich**, whose original oil painting of a Siberian tiger, "Cat and Mouse," was featured in the "Wild 100 Exhibition and Sale," Sept. 18 at the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson Hole, and sold Sept. 19 at the Jackson Hole Art Auction.

The Montana writers whose books received High Plains Book Awards during the annual awards ceremony, Oct. 3 in Billings. Thirty books were selected as finalists in 10 categories for the ninth annual event, held in conjunction with the High Plains Book Festival; of the 34 finalists, 13 were from Montana, and eight were from Canada. Winners in each category received a \$500 cash prize. **Bryce Andrews** of Missoula took top honors in two categories, non-fiction and first book, for *Badluck Way: A Year on the Ragged Edge of the West*; **Carrie La Seur** of Billings won in the woman-writer category for *The Home Place*; **Shann Ray**, a writer born and raised in Montana who now lives in Spokane, won the poetry award for *Balefire*; and **Seabring Davis** of Livingston took top honors in the culinary category for *A Taste of Montana: Favorite Recipes from Big Sky Country*. **Larry Len Peterson's** book, *Charles M. Russell: Photographing the Legend*, received the Art and Photography award. Nominations for the 2016 High Plains Book Awards, honoring books first published in 2015, will open Jan. 8.

More Congrats on next page



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## Send us your good news

Artists, writers, musicians, arts educators and arts administrators: Please let us know about major awards and accomplishments, especially beyond the borders of Montana.

Send your good news to Congrats, c/o *Lively Times*, 33651 Eagle Pass Trail, Charlo, MT 59824; or email: [writeus@livelytimes.com](mailto:writeus@livelytimes.com).

If you include a digital photo, please make sure it's at least 200 lines per inch (lpi or dpi) and a file size of over 500kb.

Congrats compiled by Kristi Niemeyer for State of the Arts





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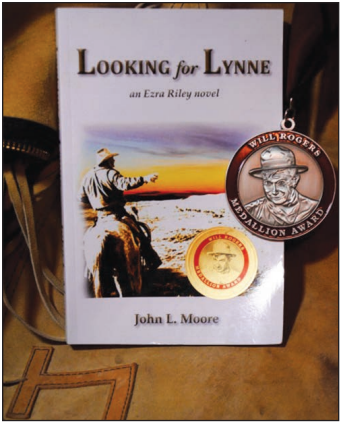
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“Like” us for updates on Montana Arts Council activities and opportunities, as well as information for and about artists, arts events and organizations across the state look for Montana Arts Council on facebook.com.

MORE CONGRATS TO ...

The Lil’ Smokies, a popular Missoula-based bluegrass band, which is appearing at the WinterWonderGrass festivals: Feb. 20-21 in Avon Co., and April 2-3 in Squaw Valley, CA. The Missoula-based band won the 2015 Telluride Bluegrass festival band competition.

Miles City rancher and writer **John L. Moore**, whose novel *Looking for Lynne* was awarded the silver medal in the Western Fiction category of the Will Rogers Medallion Awards, held recently in Fort Worth. The novel marks a return to fiction for the writer who began his career as a reporter for the *Miles City Daily Star* at 17, won the Critics’ Choice Award for Fiction from *Christianity Today* and was first runner-up for a Golden Spur Award from the Western Writers of America for his first novel, *The Breaking of Ezra Riley*. His recent work is his sixth novel and the fourth in the Ezra Riley series. Moore’s publisher was simply listed as “self,” although he has been published by several national publishing houses in the past. “I self-published this novel and didn’t try to hide the fact,” he explains. “The cowboy in me has a hard time dealing with urban publishers, editors, and agents. I wrote this for cowboys.”



John Moore’s prize-winning book, *Looking for Lynne*

The **Alberta Bair Theater** in Billings, which received a \$10,000 Art Works award to help fund four performances and their respective outreach programs: Kronos Quartet, International Guitar Night (both in February 2016), Sukay (March 2016) and Momix (November 2016). “Receiving a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts allows us to take risks in our programming and feature artists who we may not be able to book without such a strong vote of financial confidence,” said ABT Executive Director William Wood who programs the theater’s entertainment. “Artists like Sukay, Momix, Kronos Quartet and the world-class guitarists of International Guitar Night help proliferate diversity and artistic excellence.” Collectively known as its Performing Arts on the Prairie project, these four performances engage audiences who would not experience this level of musicianship without traveling to a more urban area.

**Ken Egan**, executive director of Humanities Montana, who was elected to the board of directors of The Federation of State Humanities Councils. Prior to joining Montana’s humanities council in 2009, Egan served on the council board and as chair of the English department at Drury University in Springfield, MO. He has been the recipient of Fulbright grants and has authored book-length critical studies of 19th-century American and Montana literature. In 2014 he published *Montana 1864: Indians, Emigrants and Gold in the Territorial Year* to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Montana Territory and raise funds for Humanities Montana. In addition, **Humanities Montana** was one of three state councils to receive the Schwartz Prize from the Federation of State Humanities Councils for outstanding work in the public humanities. The award was presented Nov. 6 at the 2015 National Humanities Conference in St. Louis. Humanities Montana was recognized for its Hometown Humanities program, which creates a focused partnership with a selected community to improve its cultural infrastructure and break down barriers that may exist for smaller communities looking to create more ambitious programming. For one year, the council teams up with a local community to provide between 25 and 35 humanities programs and organizational and marketing support. Since 2012, the council has worked with six communities, held more than 150 events and reached more than 6,250 people. The 2015 Schwartz Prize judges praised this program’s original solution to a common challenge and view the program results as essential program-format research.



Ken Egan  
(Photo by Terry Ann Egan)

The **Bozeman Film Society**, which is Montana’s first recipient of a national Science on Screen grant from the Coolidge Corner Theater and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Established in 1978, the BFS was among 23 independent, non-profit cinemas from across the country selected to receive an \$8,500 grant to implement a Science on Screen program, which creatively pairs screenings of classic, cult, feature and documentary films with lively introductions by notable figures from the world of science, technology, and medicine. BFS will present the series March 30-May 25 at Bozeman’s historic Ellen Theatre, partnering with local organizations such as Montana Outdoor Science School and Children’s Museum of Bozeman. Each program has the same aim: to engage people in science using film as the foundation. Visit [www.bozemanfilmsociety.org](http://www.bozemanfilmsociety.org) for details.

The **Montana Folk Festival** in Butte, which was recently designated by The American Bus Association (ABA) as one of the Top 100 Events in North America for 2016. Inclusion in the Top 100 list, published as a supplement to the September/October issue of *Destinations Magazine*, indicates that the Montana Folk Festival offers excellent value to both tour groups and individual travelers from around the world, according to ABA. “The attractiveness of the Montana Folk Festival as a don’t-miss entertainment value is only part

of why its selection this year is such a distinction for Butte, Montana,” said Peter J. Pantuso, ABA’s President and CEO. “The real news here is that the Montana Folk Festival has been recognized as a potential magnet for tourism dollars, at a time when reenergizing domestic tourism is so important to our spirit and our economy.” The Montana Folk Festival returns to Butte July 8-10.

CONDOLENCES TO ...

The family and friends of Billings artist and art teacher **Connie M. Landis**. She died Aug. 27 after a yearlong battle with lymphoma. Landis, who was born in 1940 in Appleton, WI, graduated from Lawrence College and taught elementary art before moving to Montana in 1968 with her husband, Bob. She taught art at Billings West High School and became a professor at Eastern Montana College (now MSU Billings) in 1978 where she remained until her retirement in 2015. In her long tenure, she won many teaching awards, became chair of the art department and earned a doctorate at the University of Wisconsin. She was a feminist when that was not a popular stance to take. Her husband, Bob, remembers her as a partner who hiked the wilderness of Alaska and British Columbia, survived and loved their experiences in Botswana, and settled in Billings, far from her home in Wisconsin. Her friends remember her as a person with strong values who was willing to throw a party to celebrate their triumphs. She pushed her students to be their best, and to carry the torch of art education at all levels. They will remember Connie as the teacher who, along with her demand for excellence, had time for fun, and was a bit eccentric.



Connie M. Landis

The friends and family of choral director **Dr. David Barnett**. He died Nov. 28; he was 70. Dr. Barnett was director of the award-winning Big Sky Chorus for 12 years, as well as serving as the Billings Symphony Chorale director. He had over 35 years experience as a music educator, choral conductor, and tenor soloist. This includes five years singing professionally with the Robert Shaw Chamber Singers and over 23 years conducting choral music at the high school, college and university level. He performed as tenor soloist with the Robert Shaw Chamber Singers, the Atlanta Symphony, the Lanier Symphony, the Gwinett Choral Guild and the Billings Symphony. A graduate of Florida State University with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Choral Music Education, he also held a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Choral Conducting from the University of Miami. Choral ensembles under his direction have performed in Carnegie Hall, as well as England and Russia. He also served as a vocal and choral adjudicator in Montana and adjacent states. During his retirement, he devoted his creative energies to promoting the Barbershop Harmony Society.



Dr. David Barnett

The friends and family of artist **Peggy Jo Erickson Baraby**. She passed away peacefully Sept. 24 at age 82, surrounded by her loving family. She was the mother of Montana Arts Council Percent-for-Art Director Kim Baraby Hurtle. She had four passions: her family and close friends, her artmaking, traveling and being by the water. Her family crowned her the Goddess of Color and she honored her title with many good works. She was a Signature Member of the International Society of Experimental Artists, and had paintings exhibited in Montana, Texas, Michigan, Idaho, Indiana and British Columbia. Since 1962, and with the same group of women, she belonged to the Merry Mixers Home Demonstration Club (U.S. County Extension Service) and together they shared a life of community building. Her travels took her to the Hawaiian Islands, Curacao, Mexico, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, the Grand Canyon and across the U.S. for her nutrition program. As a key source of inspiration, she taught family and friends how to use the creativity each of us was born with, how to forgive, how to teach, and how to gather up and remember what is important in this life.



Peggy Jo Erickson Baraby

The friends and family of Polson artist **Marjorie Ann “Marje” (Burnett) Grinde**. She passed away peacefully Oct. 10 in Milwaukie, OR. Grinde, who was born in Salt Lake City and grew up in Billings and Albuquerque, taught in a one-room school in Lindsay, MT, before returning to college in Los Angeles, where she graduated from UCLA in 1946 with a degree in applied art. She and her husband, Bob, moved to Glendive in 1952 and to Polson in 1955. Among her many accomplishments, she was very active in the local art culture and a founding member of the Sandpiper Art Gallery. Her watercolor paintings were featured in a number of juried shows. She was also a competitive bridge player, and took up running in her 50s, participating in the Governor’s Cup and Bloomsday runs several times.

The friends and family of **Jim Manley**, who died Aug. 1 at his home near Bigfork. He was born on St. Patrick’s Day in 1947 and loved music, art, Flathead Lake and his cats. He was a co-founder of the annual Bigfork Arts Festival and Bigfork Townies vs. Playhouse softball game. He also worked with the Mission Mountain Wood Band.



# Vienna International Ballet Experience (from page 1)

“This is about democratizing dance while elevating the status of Montana as an arts and cultural center,” she adds.

The Vienna International Ballet Experience is open to professionals, students and amateurs (deadline was Dec. 5). The categories of competition are classical, contemporary, and an open category which is all-inclusive: hip-hop, tap, ethnic, musical-theater, and all styles of dance will be featured.

In addition to the dance competition, VIBE USA includes master classes and discussions; and a film festival highlighting international and culturally relevant films with panel discussions featuring experts on film and international relations.



Missoula ballerina Katy Clay, shown here splashing in the Clark Fork, is studying at Sunrise Studios Musical Theater School in Vienna on a full scholarship.

(Photo courtesy of Destination Missoula)

The Mansfield Center will co-host a “The Art of Diplomacy,” a symposium on Friday that explores the role of the arts and artists in rebuilding human connections when diplomacy fails.

Most events take place at The University of Montana, with a gala performance featuring the winners and international guest stars, 1 p.m. Jan. 16 at the Wilma Theater. Admission (except for the gala) is free.

Local partners include the Mansfield Center, The University of Montana, the Washington Foundation, Destination Missoula, The Wilma, the Top Hat, and a growing number of sponsors and supporters.

For more information about participating, or tickets to the gala, visit [destinationmissoula.org/vibe](http://destinationmissoula.org/vibe).



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## Full Circle Moment: Bringing the world stage to Montana

By Charlene Campbell Carey  
Artistic and Executive Director,  
Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre

For many of our students and professional dancers, who have joined me abroad with the Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre, this January will represent a “full circle” moment. We have gone out into the world to China, Europe, South America and Canada, and now the world is coming back to us. We intend to reciprocate with all the warmth and hospitality we have received, thereby making Missoula one more brick in the house of international understanding.

In January, for the first time ever, the Vienna International Ballet Experience will be hosted on U.S. soil – not in New York, Chicago or L.A. – but in Missoula, Montana. The Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre will host the very first VIBE USA competition, which will include a film festival with Emmy Award-winning filmmakers in town to discuss their work.

Additionally, the Mansfield Center will be joining VIBE USA by hosting a gathering of thought leaders, diplomats and international policy makers for “The Art of Diplomacy,” discussing the role of the arts and artists in rebuilding human connections when diplomacy fails. For many Montanans, this will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience that might open their eyes to a whole new world of inspiration.

This is also a full-circle moment for me



Charlene Campbell Carey: “Culture does not exist only in the metropolitan hubs of the world.”

personally. In the 1990s, I lost my 2-year-old son Gavin to cancer. I decided to move to Missoula to start over. Finding comfort in my passion for dance, I started the Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre in a small studio along the railroad tracks on Spruce Street. (The trains were sometimes so loud, we had to stop whenever they thundered by!)

In those days, each time I could help open a child’s eyes to new opportunities available to them, I strung another moment of joy onto what has now become a long and never-end-

ing series of moments, and those moments have helped to heal my broken heart. I am grateful.

Almost 20 years later, I can say through art and dance I have witnessed many children’s magic moments when they switched on or connected the dots of how their lives can be enriched by all forms of dance, and then used it as their own, unique form of human communication.

When we added the international component, we, as a dance company thrived in a different way. The children, and adults who accompanied them, learned to understand foreign customs and habits. We have gone out in the world and now the world is coming home to us.

Culture does not exist only in the metropolitan hubs of the world. It has been our mission to connect not only with people in the big cities, but also visit rural areas where seeing a dance performance is unlikely. Like any art, dance is a form of communication, but lucky for us, it’s one that anyone, no matter what their language skills, can understand.

Through a truly universal language, Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre has effectively taken a choreographed version of the Rocky Mountains to all corners of the earth. I hope you will consider joining us in welcoming our guests and taking part in the VIBE USA events, Jan. 12-16 – it’s an unforgettable experience we invite the entire state to enjoy.

### Call for Cultural and Aesthetics Project Advisory Committee

Applications for membership on the Cultural and Aesthetic Project Advisory Committee will be accepted through May 2, 2016. The Montana Arts Council makes half of the appointments to this committee and the Montana Historical Society makes the other half.

The arts council looks for a broad range of professional arts expertise, and also geographic, racial and gender balance for the committee. Obligations of the four-year terms include attending a two-day panel meeting every other year and reviewing up to 100 grant applications online each grant cycle.

The next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 9-10, 2016, in Helena. If you are interested in being considered, please send a letter of interest and a resume or bio electronically to Kristin Han Burgoyne at [kburgoyne@mt.gov](mailto:kburgoyne@mt.gov) by May 2, 2016.

## TRANSITIONS

### Carolyn Valacich retires from Great Falls Symphony

Great Falls Symphony Executive Director Carolyn Valacich plans to retire at the end of December, but has promised to stay on with the symphony until her successor is in place. Valacich took over as executive director of the Great Falls Symphony 28 years ago, in November of 1987.

Music director and conductor Gordon Johnson told the *Great Falls Tribune* that much of the symphony’s growth and success over the past three decades was spurred by Valacich’s keen sense of her community. “She has an intuition about knowing how people will respond,” Johnson said.

As executive director, her responsibilities have included administrative oversight of support staff and all aspects of management, marketing and fundraising. Under her leadership, the Great Falls Symphony experienced sustained program growth and increased its annual budget from \$130,000 at the beginning of her tenure to a current budget of over \$750,000.

Valacich has been a strong influence and advocate for the expansion and development of educational programming during her tenure, including the addition of a full-time woodwind resident quintet and regional Youth Orchestra. She was a positive influence in the symphony’s commitment to present world-class artists in Great Falls, beginning in 2004 with the appearance of Yo-Yo Ma and continuing with such luminaries as Itzhak Perlman, Midori, Joshua Bell, etc.

In addition, under her leadership, a permanent endowment was established which has grown to over \$2.5 million, which provides a strong foundation for the symphony’s future growth.



Carolyn Valacich

Prior to assuming her leadership role with the symphony, she was an active volunteer in the both the Great Falls community and statewide organizations. She also worked as a nonprofit trainer and facilitator, conducting workshops in the areas of organizational efficiency, fundraising, board development and volunteer leadership.

Many organizations have been touched by her leadership. She served as organizing member of the board of directors of Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, a trustee of the C.M. Russell Museum, president of the Junior League of Great Falls and a member of the Western Regional Area Council of the Association of Junior Leagues.

On the state level she served 10 years on the Montana Arts Council, as past chair of the Russell Region Committee of the Montana Community Foundation, on the board of the Montana Association of Symphony Orchestras, and on the Governor’s Tourism Advisory Council. She was honored as the 2003 recipient of the YWCA *Salute To Women*, in the Business and Professional category.

Prior to becoming the executive director of the symphony, she was involved with the Symphony Guild, serving in a number of leadership roles. Valacich says she will continue to be an active participant in the local and statewide nonprofit volunteer community and also plans to do some independent consulting and grant writing.

“Every moment I have spent during these 28 years has been challenging and rewarding,” she told the *Tribune*. “It has never been boring.”





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## Applications open for 2016 Youth Program Awards

The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, is accepting applications for the 2016 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Awards.

The 12 award-winning programs this year will each receive \$10,000 and an invitation to accept their award from President's Committee's honorary chairman, First Lady Michelle Obama, at a ceremony at the White House.

After-school and out-of-school time arts and humanities programs are encouraged to apply by Feb. 2. Learn more at [www.nahyp.org](http://www.nahyp.org).

## Artists in Schools and Communities Registry seeks qualified teaching artists

The Montana Arts Council is now taking applications for its revised Artists in Schools and Communities Registry. This resource helps schools and community organizations identify professional teaching artists who can help Montana students acquire knowledge and skills in the arts and experience life-long learning through creative expression, exploration and participation in the arts.

The AISC Registry is intended as a place for schools and communities to shop for a quality arts-learning experience for their population.

Professional teaching artists in all disciplines, including visual and media arts, dance, theatre, music and creative writing, are welcome to submit an application. Arts organizations and performing groups that provide education outreach programs to schools and communities are also eligible.

The deadline for application has been extended to 5 p.m. Feb. 1. A second round of applications will be accepted in May for possible addition to the registry in July. Visit MAC's homepage at [art.mt.gov](http://art.mt.gov) to download the guidelines and application.

Direct all questions to Arts Education director Emily Kohring at [ekohring@mt.gov](mailto:ekohring@mt.gov) or 406-444-6522.

## Artists in Schools and Communities FY17 grant cycle opens

Guidelines for the FY17 Artists in Schools and Communities program will be available on the MAC website beginning Jan. 8 for projects occurring between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017.

The Montana Arts Council strives to provide access to quality arts learning to develop the creative potential of Montanans of all ages. Towards that end, the Artists in Schools and Communities program provides matching funds that support a wide range of arts learning experiences and artist residencies with professional working artists, as well as other special projects that support arts learning in schools and community settings.

There will be one deadline for all grant requests \$1,500 and over in the Arts Learning Experience, Artist Residency, and Special Projects categories. This deadline is 5 p.m. April 4. Grant requests of \$1,500 and over submitted after the April 4 deadline will not be considered.

The deadline for all organizations in the Arts Learning Partner category is also April 4. Arts Learning Partners are select Montana arts organizations that have a proven record of providing high-quality arts learning experiences to participants regionally and across the state of Montana. Arts Learning Partner organizations must meet specific criteria for consideration.

Grants up to \$10,000 are available and must be matched 1:1 with other funds (MAC will provide a 2:1 match for first-time applicants, Class C schools, or small rural schools supervised by a county superintendent). Complete guidelines for FY17 will be posted Jan. 8.

## "How to Apply" Webinar

Considering an Artists in Schools and Communities application? MAC staff members Emily Kohring and Kristin Burgoyne will host a "How to Apply" webinar on Tuesday, Feb. 16, 4-5 p.m. to answer all your questions.

Please check MAC's homepage on Jan. 8, 2016, for information about registering for this event.

To discuss an idea for a potential arts learning project for your school or community, contact Arts Education director Emily Kohring, 406-444-6522 or [ekohring@mt.gov](mailto:ekohring@mt.gov).

# ARTS EDUCATION

## Big Sky Arts Education

By Emily Kohring  
Director of Arts Education  
[bigskyartsed.wordpress.com](http://bigskyartsed.wordpress.com)



## Kindness, education and the arts

Kindness seems in short supply in the world lately. Turning on the news can be really disheartening, even frightening. Not only world and national events, but the response to those events in the media, by politicians and on social media, can leave you wondering if much of the world has forgotten that Golden Rule thing.

I am an arts educator. I also have a daughter in kindergarten. My two roles combined leave me having a lot of conversations with my close colleagues lately about kindness, education and the arts.

For (too) many years, No Child Left Behind forced arts educators to put their focus on raising academic achievement using the arts as a tool. Music in service to math; drama in service to reading and writing. While there is evidence that the arts can be a great tool for learning in other content areas, arts educators during the NCLB era have too often been asked not to focus on what they know they do best.

Fostering kindness, creating compassion, building community: This is what arts educators do best.

High-quality arts educators are not just great at teaching their content area. The best ones also create classrooms where competition is minimized, collaboration is required, creativity is rewarded, and praise and encouragement are offered, not only to the student who gets the right answer, but to the student who takes a risk, offers a helping hand, plays as a team and offers a unique perspective.

The ability to show kindness and compassion are considered "soft skills" that are difficult to assess, and some may even feel these skills are for parents to teach their children and not the job of schools. But if children are to spend the majority of their waking hours at school, a school must bear some responsibility to create a community of compassion.

If you ask many successful adults who

their favorite teacher was in school, it is likely they will tell you it was their art, music, dance or drama teacher. And it's not just the kindness of the teacher they will recall, it is also the sense of belonging they felt in that teacher's classroom.

Putting a paintbrush, a trombone or a script in a child's hand, and giving them the feeling they are part of a community where they feel safe and cared for, will reap untold benefits for their future as caring and creative citizens of the world. It may even stop a lonely and



Kessler Elementary student participates in a recent residency with Tibetan monk Yeshe Rinpoche at the Holter Museum of Art in Helena.

isolated person from picking up a gun.

This morning one of our Artists in Schools and Communities grant recipients, the Holter Museum of Art, sent a photo from a recent residency with artist and Tibetan monk Yeshe Rinpoche. The caption on the photo reads: "Student working on collaborative mandala of great compassion."

The photo and the caption really struck me: "a collaborative mandala of great compassion." As much as the world needs students who graduate with high reading and math skills, it is critical that these same high-achievers be able to collaborate, and know how to show great compassion.

This quote resonates as I consider the power arts educators have to be change agents in creating a more compassionate world for our children:

*"It's not our job to toughen our children up to face a cruel and heartless world. It's our job to raise children who will make the world a little less cruel and heartless."*

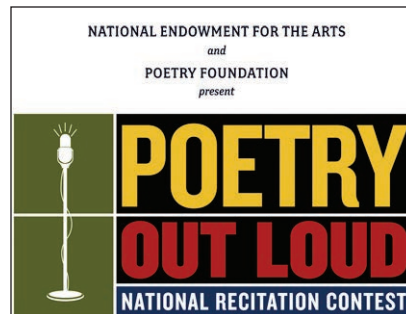
— L. R. Knost

I hope decision-makers and administrators take into consideration their responsibility to foster kindness and compassion in their school communities the next time they consider cutting an art or music program. We could all stand to live in a world that is a little less cruel and heartless.

## Poetry Out Loud State Finals set for March 12

The Montana Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts are proud to present the Poetry Out Loud State Finals on Saturday, March 12, at the Myrna Loy Center in Helena. Poetry Out Loud is a national recitation competition that encourages high school students to memorize and perform great poems.

This year, more than 80 Montana high schools are participating in the Poetry Out Loud program. Each high school holds a school competition, with winners moving on to regional competitions in Helena, Missoula and Butte. A "virtual" regional competition is also held for rural schools that can't make it to a regional event, with competitors submitting entries via video.



Finalists will gather in Helena March 12 for the chance to become the state champion. Judges include some of Montana's finest poets, who also read their poetry during breaks in the competition.

Montana's champion wins a trip, along with their teacher, to the 10th Poetry Out Loud National Finals, May 2-4 in Washington, DC. National contestants have the chance to win college scholarships of up to \$20,000, as well as a library of poetry books for his or her school.

The state competition begins at 9 a.m. and is free and open to the public. There will be three rounds of competition, with the final round beginning at approximately 12:45 p.m. For more information about the Poetry Out Loud State Finals, contact Emily Kohring at the Montana Arts Council, 406-444-6522 or [ekohring@mt.gov](mailto:ekohring@mt.gov).



## ARTS EDUCATION

## Nye and Fishtail students learn from world-class artists

By Kathleen Benoit

On an overcast afternoon in early October, a dozen rural school students, ages 6 through 12, scrambled out of vans at Tippet Rise Art Center for a workshop with internationally celebrated contemporary artist Stephen Talasnik, whose latest installation, “Pioneer,” was being constructed in the rolling hills of the Stillwater River valley between Absarokee and Fishtail.

“Where are the walls?” shouted an exuberant six-year-old from Fishtail as he pointed to dozens of 30-foot cedar poles planted into the ground at precarious angles. “There aren’t any walls,” whispered a classmate, “that is the whole sculpture.”

Thus began a comprehensive lesson in contemporary art that combined math, history, science, engineering, and the importance of imagination.

Talasnik started by describing to a rapt audience his fascination for the early years of the space program, which recently inspired him to build a series of sculptures called “Satellite.” “Pioneer” at Tippet Rise is the first opus of the series and is named for the 1960s Pioneer space-probe project.

Talasnik said he wanted to create a relationship between spirit and exploration and asked the students “what better way to depict exploration than with a satellite?”

Visualizing and actually creating a large installation piece can be complicated, and for *Pioneer* to become a reality, Talasnik told the students he needed help from some experts. He then introduced them to the specialists who are assisting him in installing the sculpture – a structural engineer, a fabricator, a

timber framer, and a construction crew.

During a question-and-answer session, a nine-year-old girl from Nye asked Talasnik how he became an artist. “When I was your age there were three things I loved to do,” Talasnik said, “build, draw, and be curious.”

He told the group that if they loved those

Lindsey Hinmon, director of operations and logistics for Tippet Rise, said the center offers workshops that encourage students to explore and understand different art mediums and techniques. She added that the charm, character, and spontaneity found in the art kids create with artists such as Stephen Talasnik and Patrick Dougherty has a lasting impact on the education experience:

“I always love the next day or week or month after a student workshop at Tippet Rise that I am still feeling the positive buzz around the community.”

Willis Johnson teaches art at public schools in Nye, Fishtail and Luther. He agrees with the importance of introducing the students to a variety of art experiences and said the outreach at Tippet Rise provides his students with exposure to contemporary art while also feeding their curiosity about the world around them.

“It’s a great opportunity for these kids to work with artists and then appreciate the roles played by specialists in other fields who help make the final structures possible,”

he said. Johnson added that the next art project with his students will definitely include Popsicle sticks and glue.

Earlier in the day, as the workshop with Talasnik drew to a close, the artist challenged the students to take on the shape of the “Pioneer” sculpture. With unbridled creativity all 12 classmates linked arms, braced each other and haphazardly kicked one leg skyward. “Best day ever,” giggled a girl near the center of the sculpture.

Talasnik examined this human sculpture and smiled. “You came to see a sculpture,” he said, “and you became the sculpture ... now get to the kitchen table and build!”



Exuberant students pose with contemporary artist Stephen Talasnik, whose latest installation, “Pioneer,” was recently installed at Tippet Rise. (Photo by Taylor Leigh Fraser)

three things, they should find a quiet place in their house and build. He said the building materials do not have to be complicated and then shared with the students his memories of a rollercoaster he constructed at his mom’s kitchen table using Elmer’s glue and toothpicks while he was still in grade school.

The students moved on from the “Pioneer” sculpture to an installation that sculptor Patrick Dougherty constructed on Tippet Rise land earlier this summer called “Daydreams” that swirls willows over and through a replicated 1800s prairie schoolhouse that is a smaller version of an actual school house on Stockade Road in Stillwater County.

## Opportunities for Native artists

## National RES Las Vegas Artisan

**Fair:** Native American vendors showcase their wares to nearly 4,000 attendees from across the U.S and Canada during this major artisan fair, held March 21-24 in Las Vegas.

The National RES event is the largest Native American business tradeshow in the country and provides an outstanding opportunity to network as well as showcase products and services to Native American businesses and organizations, including tribal governments and enterprises, federal agencies, corporations, tribal casinos, and Native American entrepreneurs and business owners.

RES Las Vegas has a limited number of artisan market booths available on a first-come, first-served basis. To reserve a space, visit [res.ncaied.org/res-las-vegas-artisan-market](http://res.ncaied.org/res-las-vegas-artisan-market).

**Eiteljorg Museum Indian Market and Festival:** Native performers and more than 150 artists from more than 60 tribes participate in this annual celebration of Native American cultures through art, music, dance, demonstrations and food. This year’s festival will take place June 25-26 in Indianapolis; the **deadline to apply for the Native Art Market is Jan. 24**.

This is a juried show, so applicants should submit the three best images of work that they plan to show and sell. Categories are Paintings, Photography, Drawings and Prints, Sculpture, Basketry, Pottery, Weavings and Textiles, Dolls, Cultural Items, Jewelry, and Beadwork.

For more information visit [www.eiteljorg.org/explore/festivals-and-events/indian-market-festival](http://www.eiteljorg.org/explore/festivals-and-events/indian-market-festival).

## NATIVE NEWS

## City Indian

## Native American Activism in Chicago, 1893-1934

By Rosalyn R. Lapier and David R. M. Beck

American Indians from across the country migrated to Chicago for the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition and the 1934 Century of Progress Fair, both hosted by the city of Chicago. Authors Rosalyn R. Lapier and David R. M. Beck, who both teach at The University of Montana, explain, “Chicago’s development in the 19th century in many ways mirrors the growth of the United States as a nation. As the century opened Chicago was very much Indian Country.”

Many of the Indians moving to Chicago during this era were educated at off-reservation boarding schools where the hope was that the children would assimilate into white society and the “Indian problem” would be solved. A significant number of these children defied expectations and instead of “reforming,” became the “reformers,” speaking out on behalf of American Indian concerns.

Native American professionals, i.e. doctors, nurses and business owners, found themselves in places of privilege in Chicago during the Progressive Era, commanding influence in societal and political arenas.

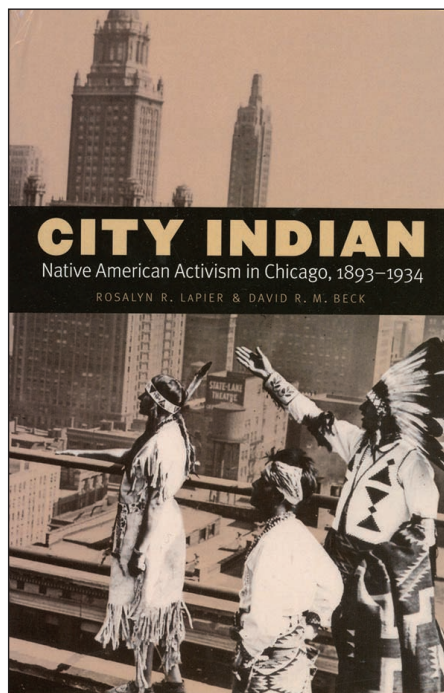
Although the presence of Native Americans at the exposition and the fair was perceived by many as entertainment, the authors contend that these events “marked

the beginning of efforts of American Indians in Chicago to take control of the narrative of both their history and their place in the modern world.”

The book, which is illustrated with numerous black and white photos and contains census data and source material, “helps us understand the motivations, strategies, tensions, controversies, and triumphs that have characterized the work and lives of local and national Indian leaders,” writes Nicolas G. Rosenthal, author of *Reimagining Indian Country*.

Lapier is an assistant professor in the Environmental Studies Program at The University of Montana, Missoula. Beck is a professor of Native American Studies at UM and the author of several books, including *Seeking Recognition: The Termination and Restoration of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siulaw Indians, 1855-1984*.

– Judy Shafter



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## Deadline is Jan. 11 for Letters About Literature

The deadline is swiftly approaching for Letters About Literature reading and writing contest: Submissions are due Jan. 11 for Levels 1 and 2.

All kids in grades 4-8 are invited to write a letter to their favorite author about how a book or poem has affected them. The best letters win cash prizes.

Download guidelines and entry forms at [www.humanities-montana.org/programs/lal/index.php](http://www.humanities-montana.org/programs/lal/index.php).

For teachers who wish to use the program to promote reading and writing in their classrooms, Humanities Montana offers curriculum resources online as well.

A few more judges are needed to help read the letters. If you are interested in volunteering, email [samantha.dwyer@humanitiesmontana.org](mailto:samantha.dwyer@humanitiesmontana.org).





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## Big Sky Documentary Film Festival

The 13th annual Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, Feb. 19-28 in Missoula, has become the largest cinema event in Montana, and a destination for documentary devotees from around the world.

The event accepts entries in all documentary forms and styles. Selected films, including world and U.S. premieres, classics, and rare and experimental works, are screened in several venues including the historic Wilma Theater.

The festival draws an annual audience of more than 20,000, including thousands of enthusiastic documentary fans, filmmakers, distributors, broadcasters and industry professionals.

In addition to 10 days of screenings, public and VIP events and receptions, the festival will feature the Big Sky Doc Shop, a five-day filmmaking conference with panel discussions, workshops and pitch sessions. The 2016 DocShop focuses on media activism and documentary film as a catalyst for positive change. Submissions of documentary works-in-progress are due Dec. 31; projects accepted for the Big Sky Pitch will be announced Jan. 8.

For details, visit [bigskyfilm.org](http://bigskyfilm.org).

# The Wilma Reborn (from page 1)

Checota – friendly, fast-talking, intense – and his wife, Robin, bought the Top Hat – a fabled but decrepit Missoula bar – in 2013, and transformed it into a hip club that now brings in some of the hottest and most eclectic shows in the state, from Lucinda Williams to Trombone Shorty.

Last spring, the Checotas purchased another revered venue, The Wilma, and began the delicate and expensive task of restoring and renovating the grand old theatre.

When it opened in 1921, The Wilma was billed as the “finest place of its sort between the Twin Cities and the Pacific Coast.”

Checota hopes to restore that reputation.

## “We’re just the caretakers”

“Like my wife pointed out, it’s not like we own it,” Checota says of his new investment. “The community owns it. We’re just the caretakers.” Even during construction, he says, “people would just walk in to see what we’re doing.”

The Wilma was built in 1921 by Billy Simons, and named for his wife, light opera vaudeville star Edna Wilma. Its acoustics were designed so its namesake could sing on stage and be heard clearly at the back of the hall.

“This theatre was an amazing thing. It was designed just perfectly in so many ways,” says Checota.

But for most contemporary bands, the kind of articulation that Edna Wilma sought is no longer a boon. “It’s an old vaudeville house, with acoustics built into the room,” Checota says. With contemporary amplification, “You don’t want that.”

That’s why he invested heavily in acoustic panels and a state-of-the-art sound system. Although it remains a challenge for a sound engineer to get the right mix in the old hall, the results are “infinitely better,” says Checota.

“It might take a year to tweak the room to get everything the way we want it,” he adds. Certainly, it’s off to a good start.

## “Missoula was ripe for this”

The Top Hat was Checota’s first venture as a nightclub owner and music promoter. He grew up in Wisconsin, and earned an undergraduate degree in business economics at Bentley University in Boston. That’s where he met Robin, a native of Great Falls, who was the RA in his dorm. They were married 20 years ago in Montana.

Nick worked in the financial services industry before earning an MBA from Vanderbilt University in Nashville. He eventually went to work for the family business, Landmark Healthcare Facilities, which designs, develops and constructs healthcare buildings and leases them to hospitals and medical groups.

But incessant travel and time demands took a toll on his family life. After 12 years, he sold his share in the business and the family moved to Missoula, where Robin’s two sisters have lived since the 1970s.

The couple has three children, and regards Missoula as “a perfect place to raise kids,” with its mix of small-town ambiance and cultural amenities.

Initially, the Checotas purchased the Army-Navy Building, remodeled it, and sold it to Plonk, a high-end wine and cocktail bar. When the Top Hat came on the market in 2012, “I thought it was a cool opportunity to do something different.”

Nonetheless, Checota found it a “huge jump” from real-estate development and overseeing a crew of engineers and designers to running a bar and restaurant and booking his own music.

It helps though, that he’s a “huge music fan. Always have been.”

He’s also very engaged in every aspect of his business, from the music, to the menu, to

organizing the seating for the evening’s show, and making sure the artists “are wine and dined.”

“The artists and agents are as important to us as the concert-goers,” he says. “Unlike all the huge production companies, the owner is here, and cares about the artist’s experience. They like that.”

As the venue owner and booking agent, Checota can also afford to be “more risk-assumptive” than many promoters. Trombone Shorty, for example, cost \$15,000 to bring to town, with \$7,000 up front. “A local promoter



Greensky Bluegrass performed this fall to an enthusiastic audience at The Wilma. (Photo by Jeff Neubauer)

often has no capital. If it’s a risk or a huge outlay, they won’t do it.”

But Checota makes money on more than ticket sales. “I need to break even or close on the artist, but I also have the bar and food – and I own the space.” That said, he also works with local and regional promoters to bring a broad mix of entertainment to both venues.

“Missoula was ripe for this,” he says. “They like good, cutting-edge music and they support it.”

## Restoring The Wilma

The Wilma allows him to put that model to work on a larger scale. The Top Hat is maxed out at 600 for a standing-room-only show. The Wilma can accommodate 1,400, which allows Checota to negotiate with larger national and international acts that are traveling from Seattle to Salt Lake, or from Portland to Minneapolis.

My Morning Jacket, The Wilma’s first show under the Checotas’ reign, sold out immediately. The band arrived for the Oct. 5 concert with four semi-loads of equipment. Thanks to the efforts of local painters, plumbers, electricians and builders, who began the project in June and put in 14-hour shifts six days a week, The Wilma was ready.

Since then, at least eight nationally touring acts have dropped by, with a variety of sound and staging requirements. The Dave Rawlings Machine delivered a largely acoustic show in October, and the alt-metal band Godsmack moved its show to The Wilma from the Adams Center Nov. 1 with less than 24 hours notice. Thanks to the remodel, the theater accommodated the arena-size production.

In preparation for remodeling the theater, Checota toured around 20 of the top-tier theaters in the country. “Every venue did something well, but none was perfect.” By comparison, he says, “the character of this room is awesome.”

Checota estimates that he’s spent \$2.5 million (beyond the purchase price) on transforming a vaudeville-era showplace into a 21st century concert hall, with the grace and ambiance of that earlier era intact.

Checota and his wife spent countless hours considering the color palette (every generation added its own layer of paint) and decided on a simple blue-gray and yellow theme. The original ceiling murals were touched up by

Missoula artist Amanda Bieble; and instead of covering the walls with sheetrock, the couple decided to restore the plaster.

The electrical and mechanical infrastructure (including the wiring my grandfather installed in the 20s) was completely redone, with new heating, cooling, and plumbing. A 12-speaker sound system by L-Acoustics hangs on each side of the stage, and fabric-covered panels were installed to improve the room’s sound quality. Motorized steel trusses were installed back stage to handle more complex lighting and sets.

The concrete floor was replaced with hardwood – “it just looks better, aesthetically” – and is tiered instead of slanted. The stage was raised 22 inches, with special attention given to the view lines from each tier and the balcony. A mobile seating system allows for cabaret-style tables and chairs, rows of theater seats, or no chairs at all on the main floor for standing-room-only shows.

The balcony has fixed seats and a bar replaced the upstairs screening room – no longer needed in a digital age. The theater will still show select movies and film festivals, including the popular Big Sky Documentary Film Festival.

A catering kitchen was added, and the Checotas secured a full liquor license from Harold’s Club in Milltown. The back wall was bumped out, so that two bars on the downstairs level and the twin stairways to the balcony are now inside the theater.

The grungy green room below the stage (rumored to be haunted), was completely gutted and replaced with elegant quarters for the headliner, equipped with a bathroom, shower, and dining area. Two offices were added, one for tour managers and another for local production staff; and the tour crew has its own area, also equipped with a bathroom and shower.

## The community vibe

The community is already lining up to enjoy the landmark for more than concerts. “Missoula was starved for a multi-use private events space,” says Checota. By late November, he had 12 private parties booked for December, and three already scheduled for January.

In addition to top-tier concert venues, both The Wilma and Top Hat serve as community centers. The Top Hat hosts Family-Friendly Fridays, a lively amalgam of kid-oriented entertainment, with drinks and dinner available. Political events, films and fundraisers also occupy the once seedy bar. Whether it’s the governor speaking at the mic, a televised political debate, or a turkey dinner to raise funds for a local family, patrons seem to take it all in stride.

The Wilma “has even more of a community vibe,” says Checota. One of its first events in October was a benefit for children who lost parents in a fatal shooting. The grand old stage has also welcomed

Washington Middle School’s concerts (“sort of self-serving,” admits Checota, since one of his children goes to school there), a ballet studio recital, and a memorial service for a well-known community member.

Part of it reflects the Checotas’ commitment to their community. “But it’s good business too,” says Nick. “Both spaces are community institutions.” Making them available at cost for community events “builds good will and serves our overall brand.”

“My philosophy is make the right investment, do it right, and you’ll recover your investment,” says Checota.

For those of us who have witnessed The Wilma’s steady decline over the past several decades, the Checotas’ pledge to thoughtfully, carefully bringing her back to life goes beyond a sound investment. It’s a gift to Missoula and the region.

Opening The Wilma and the Top Hat for community events “is good business. It builds good will and serves our overall brand.”

– Nick Checota



# ABOUT MUSIC

— By Mariss McTucker

## Almeda Bradshaw: *Lovers, Wives, and Mothers — A Western Woman's Voice*

Huntley minstrel Almeda Bradshaw is the townie kid who dreamed of being a cowgirl since she saddled up the family propane tank as a tot. Her new CD focuses primarily on frontier women, and her Americana originals recount their true stories. Bradshaw's clear, sweet alto and fluid guitar work complement her storytelling style.

There are covers of songs written by Dave Stamey and Ian Tyson, and she has set others' poems to music, as well. There's plenty of instrumental and vocal accompaniment to assist her.

Bradshaw sings about a farmer's wife who survives life with her abusive husband, prostitutes and the lives they endured, and tells the story of Cynthia Ann Parker, captured at an early age by Comanches and wed to a chief. There's also "Heavenly Here with You," Bradshaw's love song for her husband, and songs based around family and its often attendant heartbreak.

For more information and the artist's busy touring schedule, visit [almedam2bmusic.com](http://almedam2bmusic.com).

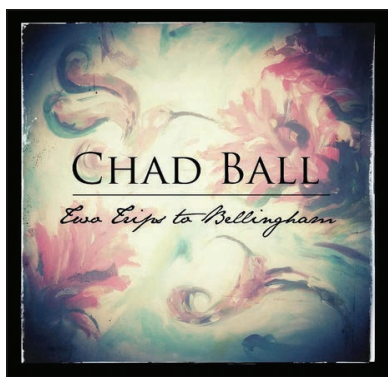


## Chad Ball: *Two Trips to Bellingham*

The third effort from Butte songwriter/guitarist Chad Ball is more introspective than his other creations, but just as heartfelt. He says, "It's scary writing about your own imperfections and mistakes that you've made in your life."

Guests on this journey include Sara Zora, violin and backing vocals; Michael Paul Masters, piano and mandolin; Scott Gibson, Dobro; Logan Dudding, drums; Rob McClain, bass; and Keira Arps, backing vocals. Ball does all the guitar work, and besides possessing a fluid playing style, he can make his engaging baritone voice do pretty much what he wants.

The 11 originals delve into politics, relationships, experiences on the road, and family history. There's lots of thought-provoking stuff going on here. And though there's no title tune, Ball promises to reveal the reason for that on a later album. Check out [chadball.com](http://chadball.com).



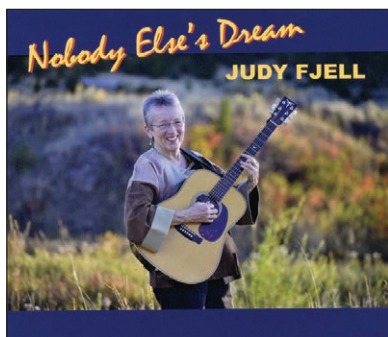
## Judy Fjell: *Nobody Else's Dream*

Helena singer/songwriter Judy Fjell has her 18th recording out, featuring guest performers on 13 compositions. There are drums, bass, violin, cello, flute, and trombone, while Fjell herself takes on guitar, harmonica, trumpet, and keyboards. There's lots of help on harmony, too. All this makes for a dynamic, smooth sound.

Fjell grabbed a guitar as a teen, and when she began writing songs, she took the folk and women's routes, soon appearing at concerts nationwide. She's been a musical staple in Montana for many years, and conducts workshops, camps and music ministries, writing and teaching about causes she believes in. Needless to say, she gets her message across through her music.

Fjell's inimitable, vibrato-laden voice bends around the lyrics in "No Turnin' Back," a missive to heal the planet; she combines news stories in the danceable "Imaginary Lines"; the bluesy title song finds Fjell belting out how she is her own woman; "Queer As a Three-Dollar Bill" evokes the girl groups of the 40s; and "Bless This House" is a quiet hymn.

Fjell's many fans will enjoy this album, and it's sure to win new listeners too. Visit the artist at [judyfjell.com](http://judyfjell.com).



## Kenny James Miller Band: *Live from 11th & Grant*

This powerful blues trio from the Flathead Valley recently released a CD made from their live performance on the popular Montana PBS television show, 11th & Grant with Eric Funk.

The trio features guitarist and vocalist Ken Sederdahl, bass player Mark Cornett, twice the winner of the Inland Empire Blues Society award for best bassist, and drummer Mark Miller. All are astounding musicians; Sederdahl's lightning-smooth guitar licks and husky vocals lead the way.

The album features 15 original tunes by a trio that sounds like there's a lot more players than three making this wonderful sound. Tunes cover many topics, some spiritual, hopeful in nature, as is Sederdahl's wont. Others touch on hardship and heartbreak. All of them are expressed with high-octane emotion — just how the blues should be played.

This album cooks like crazy, and if you get the chance to see a re-broadcast of the show that aired on April 23, don't miss it. To get the CD and hear one of the best blues albums to come around in a while, visit [kennyjamesmiller.com](http://kennyjamesmiller.com).



## Montana Manouche

This Bozeman/Livingston-area band plays Gypsy jazz, and from the outset this self-titled album jumps. The musicians are long-time pickers and accomplished alums of many musical endeavors who have been together for several years.

Nancy and Ray Padilla (violin and rhythm guitar respectively) are joined by Dave Sullivan, lead guitar, Jerry Linn, upright bass and vocals, and Amy Dickensheets, vocals.

Together, they offer tons of tight instrumental work to complement Dickensheets's trilly soprano, luring us onto the dance floor.

Because this type of jazz started mostly in France, it was called "manouche jazz" or "jazz manouche." It zeroes in on the repertoire of famed Gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt and French jazz violinist Stéphane Grappelli, who together formed the popular Hot Club of France in the '30s.

These Montana purveyors of the genre know how to play it, too. Sullivan says he loves playing Gypsy jazz because of its "honesty, European flavor and upbeat tempo." And — wait — there's no drummer! Not necessary, folks. Linn and Ray Padilla marshal the meter just fine, thank you. Ray utilizes that certain guitar strum, or "la pompe," that is endemic to Gypsy jazz, making it swing. Visit [montanamanouche.com](http://montanamanouche.com).



## Montana ShamRockers:

### *A Soalin': A Joyful Christmas Celebration*

The wacky fellas from Polson are back with a new CD just in time for the holidays. The collection features a mix of original tunes, mostly by Neal Lewing (aka Nialls), coupled with traditional Christmas fare. John Glueckert (Liam), Rick Skates (Mick), Mike Lozar (Paddy), and Rob Sloan (Robbie) fill out the quintet. Instrumentation includes guitar, banjo, fiddle, percussion, whistle, and mandolin.

The men take turns singing lead and the group usually joins in to contribute a rousing chorus in harmony. It's a good mix of sentiment and jauntiness.

An idea to do a Christmas concert birthed this Celtic Christmas show. Besides Lewing's pieces and some time-honored classics, rocker Jackson Browne ("The Rebel Jesus") gets representation. Scottish poet Robert Burns's seasonal nugget, "Auld Lang Syne," completes the album. Fun songs with kazooos share space with serious work — all the better to represent this special time of year. Visit [portpolsonplayers.com](http://portpolsonplayers.com).



## Shane Clouse: *Through the Fire*

Missoula singer/guitarist Shane Clouse has album number five out, and it's seasoned with country-rock spice. Clouse's musical love is "Waylon-style outlaw country," and it shines through. Scads of performers on guitars and drums assist him, along with fiddle, banjo, mandolin, and pedal steel. Some are from StompinGround, the revolving stable of players that performs live with him.

Clouse, who by day runs his family's nursery business, sings lead on his own songs as well as those co-written by others, most notably Mike Ward, a friend he met in Nashville. Clouse covers a well-known gem, too: "Willin'" by Lowell George.

Clouse has opened for the likes of Dierks Bentley, Phil Vassar, Huey Lewis and Sawyer Brown, to name a few, and often performs for non-profit causes. If he's in your neighborhood, see him live and get the full impact.

Visit [shaneclouse.com](http://shaneclouse.com).



## Tim Nordstrom Band: *A Socially Relevant EP*

On his website, Red Lodge songwriter and instrumentalist Tim Nordstrom quotes psychologist Amos Wilson: "If you want to understand any problem in America, you need to focus on who profits from the problem, not who suffers from the problem." That pretty much sums up Nordstrom's focus on his new EP.

The alum of Montana Tunesmith is a social worker by profession and has seen how poverty afflicts disadvantaged people with mental disorders and dependencies. Nordstrom's songs encourage us to show more empathy as a nation, and share more of our wealth with the disadvantaged.

He is the band here, playing guitars, keyboards and percussion, and singing three pieces. Nephew Eli Nordstrom sings lead on two, including "Stop Falling in Line," which exhorts us to think for ourselves, and stand up for what we believe in.

Nordstrom's songs highlight how the wealthy subsist on the sweat equity of the middle and lower classes, and proclaims that we must stop it. Social relevance, indeed. Visit [timnordstrom.com](http://timnordstrom.com).



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## State of the Arts welcomes CDs

State of the Arts welcomes CD submissions by Montana musicians for inclusion in the About Music section. The recordings must be professional, commercially available, full-length CDs, with cover art and liner notes. Brief biographical information on band members would be helpful to the writer.

Please send submissions to either the Montana Arts Council, PO Box 202201, Helena, MT, 59620; or *Lively Times*, 33651 Eagle Pass Trl., Charlo, MT 59824.





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## How to submit a book for State of the Arts

To submit a book by a Montana author for inclusion in *State of the Arts*' "About Books" section:

Please send a copy of the book to *Lively Times*, 33651 Eagle Pass Trl., Charlo, MT 59824; or submit the following information electronically to [writesus@livelytimes.com](mailto:writesus@livelytimes.com) or [mac@mt.gov](mailto:mac@mt.gov):

- Title, author, publisher, and month/year published;
- A brief description of the book (no more than 200 words), and a short bio of the author;
- A cover image: minimum 200 dpi in pdf, jpg or tiff file;
- If other publications or authors have reviewed the book, send a brief sampling of those remarks.

If you would like us to return the book, include a note with it saying so. (We will pay for shipping.)

E-books: We'll also mention books that are only electronically published: send title, author, a cover image, website for downloads, and a brief paragraph about the book.

Books submitted to *State of the Arts* appear in this publication at the Montana Arts Council's discretion and as space permits. They will not necessarily be reprinted in *Lively Times*.

## ABOUT BOOKS

### *Confessions of a Camo Queen, Living With An Outdoorsman* By Kristen Berube

With her tongue planted firmly in her cheek, Missoula writer Kristen Berube tells what life is like married to an avid outdoorsman who thinks that a "fun date" is a ride down a rough dirt road in a reeking truck full of dog hair and fast-food wrappers to scout game. She takes readers inside the mind (one-track), truck (stink wagon) and wardrobe (solid camo prints) of her mate to bring insight into the life of a Camo Queen.

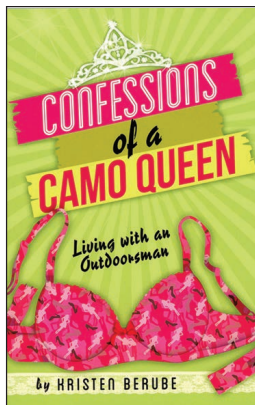
"A camo guy is always looking for elk, deer, shed horns, big furry critters, little furry critters, and anything with an open season on it," she explains. To survive, the Camo Queen must learn to accept and admire gifts of pink camouflage undies (whose idea was that?), another deer head to enhance the dining-room décor, or a box of ammo.

Chapters in the wild, laugh-inducing romp include "The Romance of Camping," "Truck Lust," "Huntin' n' Fishin' Lingo," and "Hunting Camp Fashion." Check out this outfit: "A checkered hunting jacket with the sleeves cut off, too-short running shorts, and ... wait for it ... clogs." And even those are camo-colored.

In order to be a member of the sisterhood of Camo Queens, Berube says, you must have a sense of humor. "What can you do? You gotta laugh."

Berube lives in Missoula where she enjoys a "laughter-filled life with her avid outdoorsman husband Remi and their three camo-clad children ..." This is her first book; learn more at [farcountrypress.com](http://farcountrypress.com).

— Judy Shafter



### *Snakes, Alligators, and Broken Hearts: Journeys of a Biologist's Son* By Sneed B. Collard III

Well-known for his books for young readers on science topics and mystery plots, Missoula author Sneed Collard takes a detour in his latest effort, which recounts the events of his youth that steered him toward his career as a successful author.

Written for young audiences, Collard describes with humor and frankness the heartbreak of his parents' divorce, his "rocky journey through adolescence" and happy times spent with his father, a biologist, in pursuit of scientific exploration. Summers spent near the water were some of the happiest and most educational times in his youth, nurturing a lifelong curiosity and love for science.

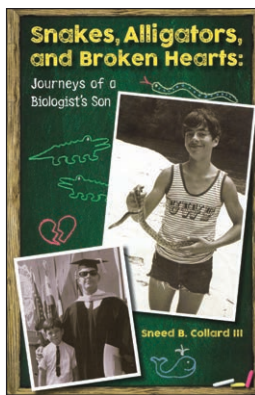
He also gives generous credit to favorite teachers who encouraged him and helped smooth the path through some of the toughest years.

Set in the 1960s and 70s, the author weaves historical events into his narrative, giving a perspective to the times in which he was growing up and forming his opinions about life. The book contains several photos.

Collard hopes young readers take away a message that's relevant at any age: "Even if the rest of the world fails to understand what they are going through, they have the strength and perseverance not only to survive, but to thrive."

Collard has won several awards, including the Washington Post-Children's Book Guild Nonfiction Award for his body of work. Some of his recent mystery titles include: *The Governor's Dog Is Missing*, *Double Eagle*, *Hangman's Gold* and *Cartwheel*. Learn more at [www.sneedbcollardiii.com](http://www.sneedbcollardiii.com) and [buckinghorsebooks.com](http://buckinghorsebooks.com).

— Judy Shafter



### *The Deer Walking Upside Down* By Jerry McGahan

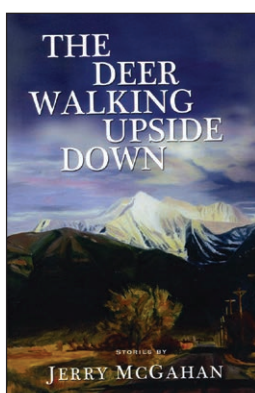
Arlee artist and writer Jerry McGahan has selected a dozen of his stories, written over a period of 20 years, for this debut collection. These short fiction pieces introduce readers to ordinary people, living seemingly ordinary lives in the rural landscape of contemporary Montana. The author masterfully and subtly draws from his characters what makes their particular story worth telling.

Unrequited love, lost dogs, bullets gone astray, and a woman standing firm to protect wilderness from the ravages of corporate America all figure into story lines. In "Asleep in a Sturgeon," two hunters find a woman's body frozen in a glacier. Her ancient story is gently juxtaposed with the present, as the men remove the skeleton, hoping to cash in on their find.

The interplay of emotions of the author's human characters find their roots in the natural world that surrounds them and shapes their lives, even if it's only for a split second, in the rearview mirror, when a deer "walks upside down" in the title story.

Several of McGahan's short stories have appeared in literary journals, including *Antioch Review*, *Gray's Sporting Journal* and *Ploughshares*. He has written articles for *American Bee Journal* and *National Geographic* and authored *A Condor Brings the Sun*. His new book was published by Schaffner Press, Tucson, AZ.

— Judy Shafter



### *Butter Off Dead*

By Leslie Budewitz

Leslie Budewitz's third installment in the Food Lovers' Village Mysteries series finds our heroine, Erin Murphy, a purveyor and lover of all things gourmet, still running her family's business in the scenic enclave of Jewel Bay. To cheer up the locals during the gray days of winter, her friend Christine has cooked up the idea of a Food Lovers Film Festival.

Plans are well underway when Christine is found murdered. The event sets off an investigation that brings Erin's brother under suspicion, even though he and Christine had seemingly rekindled their estranged romantic relationship.

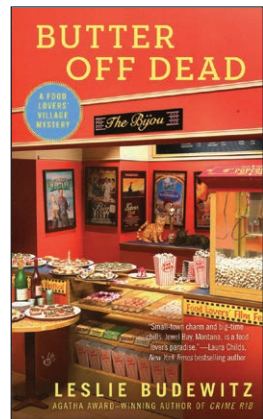
Not content with the local sheriff's investigative abilities, Erin, with treats and favorite beverage in hand, consults her "Spreadsheet of Suspicion" to clear her brother's name and find the real perpetrator.

Budewitz's gift for language and detailed descriptions wraps readers into the story like a favorite garment. As Erin goes about her search, the author adds fact to her fiction with information about the physical, cultural and political geography of the setting.

And as usual, there is food, glorious food, to revel in. (Budewitz shares some of the mouthwatering recipes in the back of the book.)

Budewitz is also the author of *Death Al Dente* and *Crime Rib* in this series, and two additional books in her Seattle-based crime series, the Spice Shop Mysteries. The Bigfork author and attorney is a two-time recipient of the Agatha Award.

— Judy Shafter



### *Ranger*

By Michael Hoyt

Long-time mountaineer Michael Hoyt, the author of two major guidebooks on the wilderness areas of Montana's Bitterroot Mountains, has woven a story of wolves, ravens, magic, and empathy, set in the wilderness he knows so well.

Told from the viewpoint of a wolf, Hoyt says the story was written to help young people experience the existence of another being and hopefully understand the shortsightedness of many human actions.

The main character of the book, a young male wolf named Ranger, is the only survivor of a murderous attack on his family. The fledgling wolf must deal with the tragic loss of his pack while learning to harness his newly discovered magical powers.

Swedish artist Elvira Hammarstedt designed the cover and created several pen-and-ink illustrations for the 220-page novel, published by Stoneydale Press in Stevensville. For details, visit [www.stoneydale.com](http://www.stoneydale.com).



### *Blacktail Cave and Bear Stories*

By Tag Rittel

A new release by Stoneydale Press of Stevensville tells the amazing story of how five boys discovered a cave near Wolf Creek that holds scientifically-documented evidence of prehistoric human and animal life in Montana.

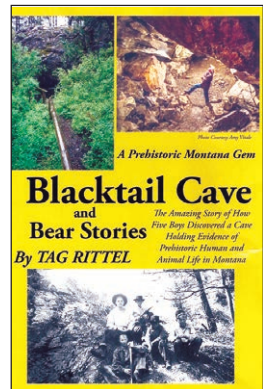
Written by long-time Montana rancher and outfitter Tag Rittel of Wolf Creek, on whose ranch the cave is located, *Blacktail Cave and Bear Stories* explains how he and four other boys discovered the cave in 1946 and details subsequent university-based studies on the contents of the cave and its significance.

Scientists have documented human existence in the cave 10,000-11,500 years ago and found prehistoric bear and musk-oxen skulls that date back 12,000 years. In addition, hundreds of remains of various animals have been found in the cave and its immediate surroundings.

Rittel, now 85, was 15 years old when he and four friends launched an expedition on his family's ranch to locate and subsequently explore the cave after hearing legends about its existence. It's since been labeled a "prehistoric Montana gem."

Chapters include a number of "bear stories," describe paintings in the cave entrance and its altar, and detail the animal remains found there.

Rittel has been a prominent rancher and wilderness outfitter in Montana for many years, but his childhood affinity to the Blacktail Cave has kept him involved in its exploration over the past six decades. Learn more at [www.stoneydale.com](http://www.stoneydale.com).



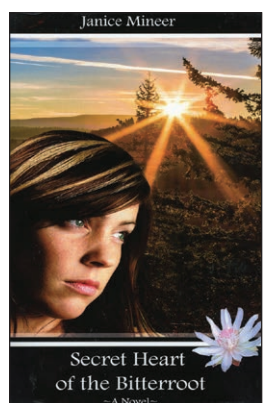
### *Secret Heart of the Bitterroot*

By Janice Mineer

This debut novel by Bitterroot Valley author Janice Mineer tells the story of a young woman who finds the courage to overcome past failures in her family and write a new script for her own life. As Jenna Clark's loveless relationship crumbles, she meets an attractive man with ghosts of his own. She also unearths a family secret and begins the search for her real father, even as probing into the past threatens her life.

"The stories of so many of the people I admire and love are threaded through this story," writes the author. "I honor them for their courage to be agents of change in the history of their family."

Mineer, a graduate of Brigham Young University, is also the author of an illustrated children's book, *Gingerbread from the Heart*. Learn more at [janicemineer.com](http://janicemineer.com).





# ABOUT BOOKS

## Three Ringlings in Montana: Circus Trains to Cattle Ranches

By Lee Rostad

Lee Rostad has penned a concise and fascinating history of three generations of the famous Ringling Circus family, which acquired vast tracts of land for their livestock operations in the area around the author's hometown of White Sulphur Springs. Rostad was granted access to the family's photographs, and has included several of those images in this work.

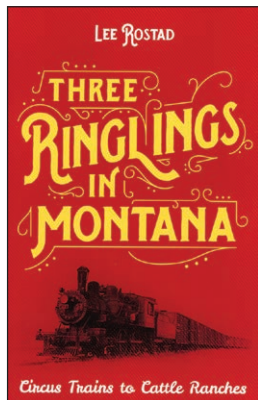
John, one of the five brothers who started the circus empire, came to Montana in the early 1900s. With his immense wealth, he bought thousands of acres, built a short-line railroad, and tried to interest investors in building a resort to exploit the area's hot mineral springs.

His nephew, Richard, arrived in 1917 to help manage the land business, but quickly began building his own legacy, which included a successful dairy operation. He was also one of the founders of the Bozeman Roundup, and helped form the Association of American Cowboys.

Richard's son, Paul, spent childhood winters in the East with the circus family and many summers in Montana. After marriage and a tour of duty during WWII, he returned to the area to help manage one of the family's ranches. Eventually, he and his wife bought a place of their own. The former state legislator, now in his 90s, remains a respected authority on agriculture and conservation management issues.

The author is a graduate of The University of Montana and a former Fulbright Scholar. Her book, *Grace Stone Coates: Her Life in Letters*, received a WILLA Literary Award in 2005. Learn more about her latest effort at [www.riverbendpublishing.com](http://www.riverbendpublishing.com).

— Judy Shafter



## American Copper

By Shann Ray

Montana-grown author Shann Ray's debut novel fulfills the promise of his enigmatic stories (*American Masculine*) and poems (*Balefire*). Like those earlier works, he reaches deep into the human psyche where loss and love coexist.

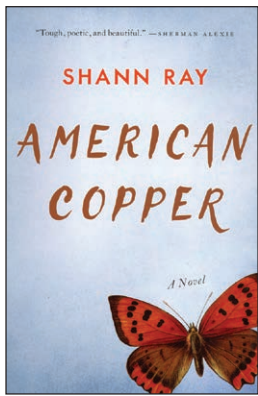
From the heartbreaking Sand Creek Massacre, when a 700-man force of Colorado militia murdered a sleeping village of Cheyenne, to the ruthless ambitions of a copper baron, who sacrifices family to power and wealth, Ray mines the uneven and often brutal history of the West.

Evelynne, a poet whose fortitude "was like the mountain," is fiercely loved and obsessively sequestered by her vigilant father, and shattered by her brother's death. William Black Kettle, descendant of the peace chief who survived Sand Creek, is intelligent and charismatic, "an agile runner, ken of horses, kin to speed"; and the massive Zion, who bloodies men and calms animals, is "a chimera of two persons, the man of violence at odds with the angel of peace." Their stories unfold and eventually entwine in an allegorical tale of uncommon grace and unsettling violence.

Sherman Alexie describes Ray's debut novel as "tough, poetic and beautiful" and Debra Magpie Earling calls it "heartbreaking, heart pounding and not to be missed."

Ray, who teaches at Gonzaga University, grew up in Montana and spent part of his childhood on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. His story collection, *American Masculine*, won the American Book Award, the High Plains Book Award and the Bakeless Prize.

— Kristi Niemeyer



## Montana: A Cultural Medley

Edited by Robert R. Swartout, Jr.

Two thousand miles west of Ellis Island, Montana may seem an unlikely setting for poignant immigrant sagas. But people of many cultures have been coming to the Big Sky since the retreat of the last ice age.

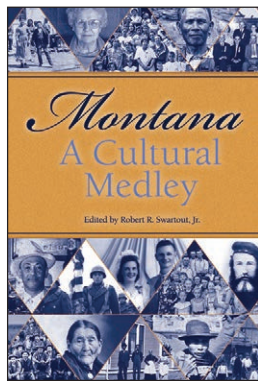
The result is a surprising diversity, superbly showcased in Farcountry Press's newest release, *Montana: A Cultural Medley*, edited by Robert R. Swartout, Jr. The 14 chapters "aptly illustrate that the ethnic history of Montana is not only rich in diversity," writes Swartout, "but is also of crucial importance in understanding the evolution of Montana's history in general."

Swartout, Professor Emeritus of History at Carroll College in Helena, gathered the essays by prominent historians from *Montana, The Magazine of Western History* and other publications.

Although the stories capture broad social forces at work, they are personal as well. A Scottish fur trader marries into tribal life in the Mission Valley; a young football standout from Three Forks says goodbye to his Japanese parents to fight the Nazis in WW II; and a talented boxer leaves the ring to open a jazz club serving the African American community (and everyone else) in Great Falls.

The book also describes the experiences of Métis settlers, Dutch and Danish farmers, Irish miners in Butte, Mexican-American sugar beet workers, Chinese railroad builders, Jewish merchants, European and Korean war brides, and coal miners from Finland, Croatia, and Slovenia.

Amply illustrated with 86 historical photographs, this medley is sure to delight anyone interested in Montana history, social and cultural studies, or simply great stories. Learn more at [farcountrypress.com](http://farcountrypress.com).



## House of the Rising Sun

By James Lee Burke

Laconic Texas Ranger Hackberry Holland blazes through Mexico and south Texas in Missoula author James Lee Burke's latest tale of corruption and retribution – a contemporary Arthurian quest, replete with Holy Grail.

In this version, however, instead of searching for the Grail, Holland inadvertently ends up with the mythic cup of Christ after a violent encounter with Mexican soldiers. A ruthless Austrian gun dealer wants it back, at any price.

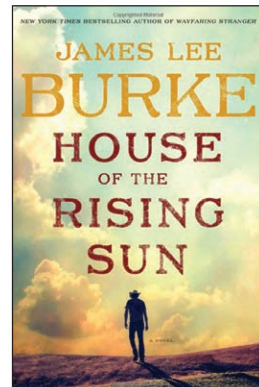
It's also the story of a father and son, separated by circumstance, choice, and the wiles of Holland's estranged wife Maggie Bassett, a laudanum addict and one-time lover of the Sundance Kid and other nefarious conquests.

She's not the only formidable woman in Burke's story: union organizer Ruby Dansen (the mother of Holland's only child, Ishmael) and brothel madam Beatrice DeMolay each bring conscience and stamina to Holland's knightly efforts to find his son, and keep the mythic Holy Grail out of the hands of its evil pursuer.

As usual, Burke's story mingles mayhem and poetry: "The sky was sprinkled with stars and streaked by meteorites that turned into flocks of ice, the thunderheads in the west pulsing with tiny forks of electricity ... Why couldn't he be in alignment with himself the way the planets and stars were, all of them hung like snowy ornaments on a tree by Druid priests?" Because heroes in Burke's 36 books are never "in alignment." They are deeply flawed, violent men, who continue to make us turn pages with startled pleasure.

"Burke's prose remains a thing of reliably fierce wonder," writes *Entertainment Weekly*.

— Kristi Niemeyer



## El Paso Twilight

By Rick DeMarinis

A drug-addled author, fixated with Wagner, a reluctant detective, and militants on both sides of the Mexican border clash in a high-speed new novel by Rick DeMarinis.

Wealthy and petulant Luther Penrose – who writes about "birth, death, and the unholy free-for-all in-between" – convinces his best, and possibly only friend, J. P. Morgan, to track down his missing wife. Carla, who teaches Latin American Studies at the local university, also helps Mexican illegals caught after crossing the nearby Rio Grande. "She was real people ... an aristocrat with calluses."

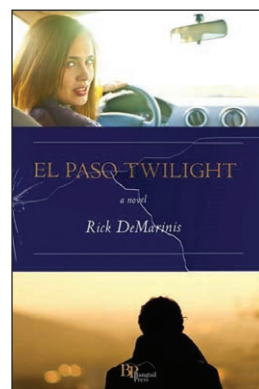
But she's disappeared, accompanied by graduate student Hector Martinez, who is wanted by both the Texas Rangers and the Hans Brinker Brigade, a gang of anti-immigrant fanatics headed by a wealthy dermatologist. According to one of the group's hired thugs, Hummer-driving Huddy Darko, "We're out to save this raggedy-ass country, whether it wants to be saved or not."

The story careens from El Paso to Juárez, Las Vegas to Phoenix, as Morgan tries to protect and abet Carla and Hector and placate Penrose, while fending off a panoply of bounty hunters. He's also trying to keep his aging mother, who sees images of the Virgin Mary in every crack and crevice, out of a nursing home.

In the *New York Times Book Review*, Marilyn Stasio describes DeMarinis as "one of that lonesome crowd of writers who love the language but aren't afraid to rough it up to save its life."

Author of 10 novels and seven collections of short stories, DeMarinis has taught creative writing at colleges and universities throughout the West. The Creative Writing Program at his alma mater, The University of Montana, gave him a Lifetime Achievement Award in September.

— Kristi Niemeyer



## Vagabond Song, Neo-Haibun from the Peregrine Journals

By Marc Beaudin

Livingston writer Marc Beaudin captures the exuberance of the road in a cart-wheeling blend of poetry, travelogue and memoir, punctuated with drawings by Livingston artist Edd Enders. Road, the author contends, is a verb.

From his hometown of Bay City, MI, Beaudin is ferried by plane, train, bus, car and thumb to a dizzying array of longitudes and latitudes: Memphis, El Paso, San Francisco, London, Edinburgh, Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, a Rainbow Gathering in Colorado, the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Each chapter is a different road, presented as movements in a musical composition.

Not only are Beaudin's travels engaging in their own right, he tosses in juicy morsels by other vagabond writers ("The bum's as holy as the Seraphim," sings Ginsberg; or Mark Twain's observation: "travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness.")

In his foreword to *Vagabond Song*, poet and essayist William Heyen proclaims Beaudin "a cat in his own category of howl and highway hymn. It's our luck that he's made a book from his old journals/marginalia/memory albums, one that will persist in our minds as a classic companion of blue moonways and on-the-road travels with Charlie."

"Is there such a thing as free-range literature?" asks Walter Kirn. "I think there is and I think this is it."

Beaudin is "settled in, off the road. At least for awhile" in Livingston, where he's co-owner of Elk River Books and artistic director of the Caldera Theatre Company. Learn more about his work at [crowvoice.com](http://crowvoice.com).

— Kristi Niemeyer



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## Guidelines for NEA's Big Read available

Two contemporary novels written by female writers have been added to the Big Read library: *Silver Sparrow* by Tayari Jones and *In the Shadow of the Banyan* by Vaddey Ratner.

These novels will be available for organizations hosting a 2016-2017 Big Read project and will further the National Endowment for the Arts' commitment to expanding the Big Read library by including diverse voices and stories.

Application guidelines for 2016-2017 Big Read grants are now available at [www.neabigread.org/guidelines.php](http://www.neabigread.org/guidelines.php). The deadline is 4 p.m. CST, Wednesday, Jan. 27.





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## AUCTION ACTION



**Missoula Art Museum Auction:** "A Wooden Bike" by Jerry McCauley

### MAM Auction: Out of the Box

The Missoula Art Museum's 44th Benefit Art Auction, Feb. 6 in the University Center Ballroom, features exemplary contemporary art by Montana-based and nationally known artists.

Think outside the box and dress-to-the-nines for this year's theme, "Out of the Box." Featured artists include auction regulars Asha MacDonald, George Gogas and Stephanie Frostad, among others. Artworks come in a variety of media, subject matter, and style; the silent auction offers 45 works, and the live event features 35.

Preview works Jan. 8-Feb. 4 at the museum during the 44th Benefit Art Auction Exhibition; the opening and artists' reception is 5-8 p.m. Jan. 8.

Tickets to the auction are \$100-\$125; call 406-728-0447 or visit [missoulaartmuseum.org](http://missoulaartmuseum.org).



**Yellowstone Art Museum's Art Auction 48:** "Fine Tuned and Pitch Perfect" by Emily Nell Yellow Bird

### YAM Auction: A fiery affair

The Yellowstone Art Museum's 48th annual Art Auction is Saturday, March 5 at the museum in Billings. The annual event is the YAM's most significant fundraiser, generating proceeds in support of exhibitions and educational programming for the entire year. The theme this year is fire (a challenging choice since actual fire is not allowed in the museum). New this year is a flamenco jazz performance by Johnny Walker.

An opening reception for the Art Auction 48 exhibition is Jan. 21. The public is invited to the opening, which offers the first chance to view this year's selections. The exhibition culminates in the annual auction at 5 p.m. March 5, which consists of a silent auction, live auction, Quick Draw, cocktails, dinner and a dessert buffet, all within the museum's spacious galleries.

Live auction bidding begins at 7:30 p.m. and includes a raffle drawing for jewelry donated by Montague's Jewelers.

Tickets are \$95-\$105 at the door; raffle tickets may be purchased separately and the ticket holder need not be present to win. Call 406-256-6804 or visit [artmuseum.org](http://artmuseum.org).

## Three important western paintings consigned to The Russell

An oil painting by Thomas Moran and two original watercolor paintings by Charles M. Russell have been consigned to the live auction on March 19 for The Russell: An Exhibition and Sale to Benefit the C.M. Russell Museum.

Thomas Moran (1837-1926)

was a British-born painter and printmaker who became one of the pre-eminent artists of the American West. In 1871, as a member of the Hayden Geological Survey, he recorded the glories of the area that Congress set aside as Yellowstone National Park in 1872.

One subject Moran interpreted time and again was the Green River in Wyoming. Measuring 20 x 30 inches, "Castle Rock, Green River, Wyoming" (1907) is an exceptional



**"Castle Rock, Green River, Wyoming"** by Thomas Moran

example of his treatment of the subject, depicting the majestic butte rising above the wide and placid bends of the fog-bound river.

This spectacular piece of western art has the potential to gavel at the highest value for a single work in

the history of The Russell.

Two important watercolor paintings by Russell will also be offered for sale.

"Water Girl" (ca. 1892) was completed during Russell's early period with the watercolor medium and depicts two Indian women on the banks of a stream, collecting water. Russell painted "Grizzly at Close Quarters" (1901) during the heyday of his production.

Visit [www.cmerrussell.org/the-russell](http://www.cmerrussell.org/the-russell).

## Western Art Week

### Great Falls humming in March with art shows and auctions

The Electric City is humming with art displays and auctions March 16-20 during Western Art Week, the annual convergence of art makers and admirers in Great Falls.

The roster of art shows and auctions includes:

**The Russell: An Exhibition and Sale to Benefit the C.M. Russell Museum**, March 16-19 at the C.M. Russell Museum and the Mansfield Center: The signature fundraising event for the nonprofit museum kicks off at 5 p.m. Wednesday at the Mansfield Center with the invitation-only C.M. Russell Heritage Awards Dinner and Russell Skull Society of Artists Preview (Skull Society artists share their works daily at the center). Thursday's Art Preview Party offers an opportunity to view auction works, 6-8 p.m. at the museum. Meadow Lark Country Club hosts Art in Action, a quick-finish event featuring an auction, entertainment and brunch, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday; action moves back to the Mansfield Center at 6 p.m. for the First Strike Friday Night Auction. Saturday kicks off with the free Russell Educational Symposium from 9 a.m.-noon, followed by The Russell Live Auction; doors open at 4:30 p.m. for the gala, which offers a sale of historic and contemporary fine art, dinner and music by the Halladay Quist Band. Auction art is on display at the museum beginning Feb. 19. Call 406-727-8787 or visit [www.cmerrussell.org](http://www.cmerrussell.org) for details.

**Out West Art Show and Sale**, March 16-19 at the Best Western Plus Heritage Inn: 110 exhibit rooms are filled with works by more than 140 artists. The show kicks off 6-9 p.m. Wednesday with the opening celebration, featuring live music. Friday and Saturday highlights include Quick Finishes and auctions of those works, and Cowboy Cuisine and Libations, 6-9 p.m. Saturday. Demonstrations and music are on tap throughout. Call 406-899-2958 or visit [outwestartshow.com](http://outwestartshow.com).

**Western Heritage Artists' "Footprints on the Trail" Art Show and Sale**, March 16-19 at the Holiday Inn: The 35th annual show, which features works by more than 60 artists in an array of media, kicks off Wednes-

day with Preview Night. Thursday brings the Quick Finish and Auction and Friday's highlight is The Paint Around, a timed event where each artist has 10 minutes to work on a piece before passing it on to their neighbor. Art Competing for a Cause at 6 p.m. Saturday includes a Quick Draw, live and silent auctions and entertainment. Call 406-868-9649 or visit [www.westernheritageartshow.com](http://www.westernheritageartshow.com).

**Wild Bunch Art Show**, March 16-19 at the Hampton Inn: Gifted artists from three states show and sell their work during the annual event, which kicks off Wednesday with a meet-the-artists gala. Exhibit rooms are open daily, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Call 406-868-9649 or visit [www.anadinepickthorn.com/wild-bunch-art-shows-great-falls](http://www.anadinepickthorn.com/wild-bunch-art-shows-great-falls).

**March in Montana Dealer Show and Auction**, March 17-19 at the Townhouse Inn: The Coeur d'Alene Art Auction of Idaho and Manitou Galleries of Cheyenne, Wyo.,

team up for this 29th annual show and sale that attracts dealers and buyers from around the world. Over 50 dealers offer historic art and sculpture, contemporary art, and cowboy and Indian collectibles. The auction takes place at noon Friday and Saturday; call 307-635-0019 or visit [www.marchinmontana.com](http://www.marchinmontana.com).

**The Great Western Living and Design Show**, March 17-20 at the Four Seasons Arena, Montana ExpoPark: more than 80 vendors showcase custom-made fine crafts, art and unique western ware. Live music is on tap, too. Call 406-761-0288 or visit [www.thegreatwesternshow.com](http://www.thegreatwesternshow.com).

**Montana Watercolor Society Members' "Art-Rageous" Sale**, March 18-20 at La Quinta Inn and Suites: The inaugural sale includes 19 MTWS members; some have painted for over 30 years, and others just a few. Call 406-453-4076 or visit [www.montanawatercolorssociety.org](http://www.montanawatercolorssociety.org).

**Jay Contway and Friends Art Show**, March 17-20 at the Hilton Garden Inn: Professional artists from the western United States and Canada host their own exhibits during this annual show. Call 406-452-7647 or visit [www.jaycontway.com](http://www.jaycontway.com).

For more information, visit [www.westernartweek.com](http://www.westernartweek.com).



**"Boots" by Glenn Gerald** is part of the inaugural Montana Watercolor Society "Art-Rageous" Sale.



## ABOUT VISUAL ARTISTS

### “Rebels and Renegades: The Art of Michael Blessing and Meagan Abra Blessing”

Through Feb. 28 at Zoot Art Gallery in Bozeman

Artists’ website: [blessingfineart.com](http://blessingfineart.com)

This creative Bozeman-based couple shares paintings inspired by western landscapes and people.

Michael Blessing spent his formative years in rural Montana, surrounded by the land, people, and the usual conglomeration of machinery. After pursuing a master’s degree in Music Arts, he spent the next 30 years owning and running two recording studios and working in the music industry in the areas of performance, engineering, and recording.

A self-taught artist working in oil, he is primarily compelled by the shapes within a composition. Having discovered an initial inclination toward figurative painting, Blessing favors a candid view of his subjects, often depicting unexpected everyday moments and emotions that are universally relevant.

As a rule, he is drawn to strong compositions, vibrant color, and bold lines. His figurative work and paintings of vintage western nostalgia have an edgy quality that is both contemporary and timeless.

Meagan Abra Blessing spent her formative years packing, living and working in various western states from Alaska to Colorado. Attending college with majors in Equestrian Studies and Vocal Performance, she spent nearly 20 years teaching and training, performing on occa-



“Rebel” by Michael Blessing

Meagan’s renditions of landscapes, animals, and rural subjects are vibrant and dynamic, and her playful utilization of color and light brings a unique twist to classic and often quintessentially western imagery.

Together and individually they maintain a full exhibition schedule, including participation in The Russell exhibition and auction in Great Falls, the Mountain Oyster Club’s Contemporary Western Art Show in Tucson, the Traveling The West Art Show and Sale in Dallas, the Heart of the West Art Auction in Coeur d’Alene, as well as exhibits at galleries and museums in Montana and across the West.

### Christine Sutton, “Stampede”

Through January at the Artists’ Shop in Missoula; her work is also on display through March 11 at Paris Gibson Square in Great Falls with Jennifer Eli French in “Memory Tree”

Artist’s website: [littlebirdpainting.com](http://littlebirdpainting.com)

Bozeman artist Christine Sutton was born and raised on the prairies around Billings and studied art at The University of Montana in Missoula, receiving her BFA in 2002. She has worked as a horse packer and guide in the Greater Yellowstone region, a Montessori teacher, and a National Outdoor Leadership School instructor.

Sutton’s art is heavily influenced by the eastern Montana landscape and the animals from her childhood. Much of her work includes the spacious prairie skyline, and western icons like old barns and cottonwood trees. Her paintings are deeply layered with paint that is applied thickly then scraped and sanded to reveal deeper layers. Sutton contrasts these rough, earthy textures with a precise and intricate technique where she uses an X-Acto blade to carve out details.

The artist says she approaches her art as visual journaling, using symbolic imagery like trees, horses and foxes to tell stories inspired by memory. Recently, the artist has created small shadow boxes with moving elements that evoke meditative dreamscapes.

Her work has been shown at galleries across Montana, including Toucan Gallery in Billings, The Artists Shop in Missoula and Tart in Bozeman.



“Renegade” by Meagan Abra Blessing

al times and “finally succumbing to its call.”

Wertheimer was awarded a partial fellowship for an artist residency program at the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson last November. She is currently an active member of YOK: Artist Collective and has been a creative contributor to the M.O.P. Shop, Helena’s first interdisciplinary arts space.

She lives and works between Helena and Adel, where she resides on a ranch owned by the Hibbard family. “It is there that I have also fostered an interest in collecting bones and skulls and painting upon their surfaces,” she says. “I am fascinated by these skulls as objects, but also as sacred symbols. I paint intricate, decorative designs upon them to honor their lives and their sacrifices.”

### Patty Franklin, “The Art of Mosaics: Growing A Glass Garden”

Feb. 24-March 30 at the Holter Museum of Art’s Aquarium Gallery in Helena

Artist’s website: [www.pattyfranklinmosaics.com](http://www.pattyfranklinmosaics.com)

Hamilton mosaic artist Patty Franklin brings a new series of floral and feather-themed work to the Holter Museum. Her exhibit includes a wide variety of two-dimensional and sculptural mosaics, along with a visual journey of the tools, materials and techniques used.

Franklin is classically trained by the mosaic masters of Italy and, has adapted these ancient techniques to produce her distinct style of contemporary fine art mosaics. Her work is represented in galleries across Montana and throughout the



“Assemblage” by Ashley Wertheimer



“Glad Garden” by Patty Franklin

U.S. and has been featured in *American Art Collector* magazine.

“The complexity of mosaics satisfies my need to build structure while the effect of the repetitive work is meditative and soothing,” writes the artist.

“With an odd desire to put things in order, I assemble materials that run the gamut of trash to gold,” she says. But the primary ingredient is always glass – stained, smalti, frit and rods. While experience and instinct guide her hands, Franklin says her designs “are born from a joyful heart and a love of bright colors. I strive to offer mosaics that are uplifting and intriguing, sharing what lives in my imagination.”



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### Send your submissions for About Visual Arts

With About Visual Arts, *State of the Arts* continues to profile living Montana artists (no students, please), whose work is the focus of a current exhibit (on display during some portion of the three months covered by the current issue of *State of the Arts*).

Submissions must include:

- A digital image of the artist’s work, with title of the piece (at least 200 dpi and 500kb);
- A brief bio and description of the artist’s work;
- Dates and title of exhibit; and
- The gallery or museum name, town and phone number.

MAC will select submissions that reflect a cross-section of gender, geography, styles and ethnicity, and are from a mix of public and private galleries and museums.

Deadline for submissions for the April-June 2016 issue is March 1. Send submissions to [writus@livelytimes.com](mailto:writus@livelytimes.com) with About Visual Arts in the subject line.

**About Visual Artists  
is compiled by  
Kristi Niemeyer**



# MONTANA ARTREPRENEUR PROGRAM



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## Website offers insurance resources

Artists' Health Insurance Resource Center is a comprehensive information resource focusing on the healthcare needs of the arts community.

The health care reform legislation passed by Congress makes health insurance available and affordable for the American artist. AHIRC guides artists through the legislation and how it affects the visual and performing arts and entertainment communities.

The website provides a state-by-state overview of such topics as individual and group insurance plans; what to look for in selecting a plan; eligibility, cost and scope of coverage and more.

To learn more, visit [www.ahirc.org](http://www.ahirc.org).

## MAP Celebration of Art: Wow – What a gathering!

By Sheri Jarvis  
Folk Arts and Montana  
Artrepreneur Program Director

The Montana Artrepreneur Program (MAP) hosted its fifth annual Montana Artists' Gathering in November to mark the end of the program calendar. The event is always comprised of two parts: the first, a showcase of MAP artists and their work called "Celebrate Montana Art"; and the second, professional development workshops for MAP artists aimed at expanding artists' knowledge of relevant topics within the profession of art and entrepreneurship, and aimed further at cultivating community within the network.

### The Celebration of Art

This year, 62 artists came to Helena from across the state, traveling from as far southeast as Broadus and as far northwest as Columbia Falls. They represented 18 media categories and sold \$25,500 worth of art over the course of two days.

The outcome was impressive: 600 shoppers attended and 90% of the artists exhibiting reported having sales. Many shoppers described the show as the most beautiful, professional show they had seen in the region. Several visitors remarked at how easily and authentically MAP artists were able to share the stories of their work and reported that they truly appreciated the opportunity to engage with artists.

### The Workshops

MAP artists were treated to an *infopalooza* of valuable learning! Kicking off the conference was a dinner discussion about marketing and online business strategies with Mario Schulzke from The University of Montana. Schulzke is UM's assistant vice president for marketing, and oversees marketing, branding, social media and website development for the university. His presentation, titled "1,000 True Fans," gave all participants at the Gathering the chance to consider the value of building friendly, authentic content within a diversified media marketing strategy as a way of cultivating a sustainable patron base. He pointed out that in this day of global access, 1,000 "true" fans are within reach.

In addition, artists had access to the following workshops:

- "E-Commerce: The World of Selling Online Explained," Ivy Burford, Sageworks Marketing and Tim Carlburg, Carlburg Pottery;
- "Improving Verbal Communication,"



Artist Deb Essen of Victor at her booth ([www.djehandwovens.com](http://www.djehandwovens.com))

Creative Capital's Kirby Tepper;

- "Social Media: Get Connected," Meagan Blessing, Blessing Fine Art;
- "Licensing Your Artwork," Jan Shanahan, Wild Sky Industries;
- "Wholesale Tradeshows: Be Ready for Your First Wholesale Show," Deb Essen, DJE Handwovens;
- "Copyright Law: A Lawyer's Explanation and an Artist's Experience," Bill Fraser, attorney, and Michael Blessing, Blessing Fine Art;
- "Photography: Product vs. Process – Know the Difference and Why it Matters," Meagan Thompson, Pretty Light Images and Sue LaRose, Sue LaRose Photography.

One workshop option also included a field trip to Helena's newest collaborative makers' space, M.O.P. (Means of Production), the Archie Bray Foundation for Ceramic Arts, and the Holter Museum of Art for a nurturing immersion into the local arts scene.

Ending the conference was an awards breakfast honoring MAP Coach Jennette Rasch, who earned her Market Ready Certification. The breakfast featured an inspiring speech by MAP founder Cindy Kittredge.

### The MAP Program

MAP is an art-centered business development program of the Montana Arts Council, presented in partnership with Made In Montana, a program of the Montana Department of Commerce. The program is taught by working artists and open to all visual artists.



Artwork by Randy Glick of Great Falls (Pik Ka Handbag)

Participating in MAP requires a commitment to attend monthly workshops over the course of approximately 10 months and to financially invest in one's business of art, as well as a moderate fee and application process. Interested artists should contact MAP director Sheri Jarvis at 406-865-0884 or [sheri.jarvis@mt.gov](mailto:sheri.jarvis@mt.gov).

Photos by  
Sheri Jarvis



Artist James Weikert of Bozeman ([www.jamesweikertoriginalart.com](http://www.jamesweikertoriginalart.com))



Artwork by Darla Myers of Bozeman ([www.darlamyersart.com](http://www.darlamyersart.com))



Artist Nerissa Eckerson of Butte visits with a customer ([www.nerissacook.com](http://www.nerissacook.com))



Artist Bev Polk of Wilsall (Weaverbird Studio, [www.bevpolkhandweaver.com](http://www.bevpolkhandweaver.com))



## FILM CLIPS NEWS FROM THE MONTANA FILM OFFICE

# Busy fall for feature film production in Montana

For the first time since the early 2000s three feature films were in production in Montana at the same time in October and November 2015.

Independent feature “Buster’s Mal Heart” hit the ground in the Flathead area beginning in late October. From “The Midnight Swim” director Sarah Adina Smith, the film is a surreal thriller about a man who is metaphysically split in two. The film’s producers chose Montana because of the spiritual mystique inspired by the northwest Montana locations. The film stars Rami Malek of USA Network’s “Mr. Robot.”

Bozeman-based Oracle Film Group began production on its third full-length Montana feature in the Livingston/Bozeman area this fall as well. “The Puppy Swap,” a re-envisioning of the classic Disney film “The Parent Trap,” with a twist, features adorable, furry, canine co-stars who must help their people choose between life in the city and their dream of living in Montana. The film will have worldwide distribution and will also broadcast on the Hallmark Channel.

The directors of Montana movies “The Slaughter Rule” and “Winter in the Blood”

began production on their third feature in October in the Livingston/Bozeman area. Alex and Andrew Smith’s newest project, “Walking Out,” is based on a story by Montana-based writer David Quammen. Additional filming will take place in January 2016 and the film is expected to debut in 2017.

## Pop stars, zombies and Butte ... Oh My!



Pop stars (from left) Joey Fatone of NSYNC, Jeff Timmons of 98 Degrees, Howie Dorough and Nick Carter of Backstreet Boys, VH1 host Carrie Keagan, Gerardo Mejia (Rico Suave), and Erik-Michael Estrada of O-Town pose for a photo between takes at the Anselmo mine hoist in Butte. They were in the Mining City for a film shoot on the post-apocalyptic zombie western, “Dead 7.”

During Montana’s 2015 fire season a blanket of smoke lay heavy over Butte, and cast an eerie, ominous glow over the mining city. For the filmmakers of a futuristic horror flick, the conditions couldn’t have been better.

And who emerged from the smoky haze to save the city from a zombie incursion? 90s’ pop stars, of course.

Filming took place in August and September on a post-apocalyptic zombie western with a full cast of stars from bands such as Backstreet Boys, NSYNC, 98 Degrees, O-Town, All-4-One and Everclear. The film also features cameo appearances by VH1 host Carrie Kea-

gan, singer Jon Secada and singer-producer Gerardo Mejia, affectionately known as Rico Suave.

The movie follows a “ragtag band of gunslingers who must rid a small town of a zombie plague in a post-apocalyptic West” according to a press release from the production company, The Asylum, producers of the cult hit “Sharknado.”

“The people of Butte, the beautiful landscape and the iconic Americana locations are a huge allure for any type of film project to draw from,” said producer Dylan Vox. Filming occurred at the 1880s Ranch in Anaconda as well as the Anselmo Mine, the World Museum of Mining, Butte’s Silver Dollar Saloon, the Dumas Brothel, the Pioneer Club, Headframe Spirits, and the Lady of the Rockies – all located right in Butte, America.

More than 500 people from Montana and other states responded to a casting call released by the Montana Film Office for zombie extras, and over 100 people from the Butte-Silverbow area were cast in the film.

“Even a low budget film like ours can bring in a lot of revenue and exposure to a city very quickly,” Vox noted. “Beyond the catering, hotels, equipment rentals, locations and companies that we utilize during production, the local businesses and bars where the cast and crew spend their off time also benefit.”

The film is expected to appear in theaters this spring and will also air on Syfy.

**The Montana Film Office, a program of the Department of Commerce, posts film news, casting calls and crew calls online weekly at [www.montanafilm.com](http://www.montanafilm.com) and on Facebook at [facebook.com/MontanaFilmOffice](https://facebook.com/MontanaFilmOffice).**



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## Polson prepares for annual FLIC Film Festival

The fourth annual Flathead Lake International Cinemafest, or FLIC for short, returns to Polson Jan. 22-24 with screenings at the Showboat Cinema.

Last year’s FLIC was recognized as one of the top 15 Winter Film Festivals in the U.S. by the Audience Awards. This year’s festival continues that tradition of excellence with a variety of full-length features, shorts, animated films, and documentaries from around the world.

FLIC kicks off at 5:30 p.m. Friday with “Cinema Royale – 00FLIC,” an opening night party at Kwa-TaqNuk Resort.

The festival closes on Sunday with a “Best Of” awards show. For more information, go to [www.flicpolson.com](http://www.flicpolson.com).

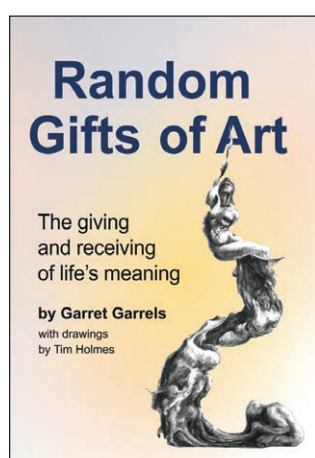
## LITERATURE & HUMANITIES

# Random Gifts of Art: Book and “social creativity project”

Anaconda-born writer, speaker, boxing coach and self-described raconteur Garret Garrels has teamed up with well-known Helena artist Tim Holmes in *Random Gifts of Art* – a book and “a social creativity project.”

It started as a simple idea: give away original drawings to strangers and ask nothing in return. This experiment between a noted artist and an international speaker has since morphed into a movement that’s traveling the world.

Find out how two people shared their problems and stumbled upon a common solution that has opened up a new world of possibilities for both of them. Giving away art, connecting with strangers, and en-



livening rather than killing time – this project shows how contagious generosity can be.

Garret, who grew up in Anaconda and played football for the Carroll College Fighting Saints in Helena, is the founder of an international women’s empowerment movement called Pink Gloves Boxing, which operates in over 30 locations across the United States, Sweden and Norway. Twice, he has finished

in the semi-finals of the World Championship of Public Speaking, and in 2011, out of 35,000 contestants from 118 different countries, he finished in the top 18 (even with a stutter).

He appears across the U.S. and Europe as a humorous and inspirational speaker.

Holmes is the first American artist ever invited to give a solo exhibit at Russia’s Hermitage museum. He has created awards for international organizations such as the U.N. Women’s Peace Prize; and Jimmy Carter, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and the late Coretta Scott King are among his best-known collectors. Although he’s most well known for sculpture, he works in a variety of media and styles inspired by the human struggle, all pointing toward a more responsive, cooperative and sustainable future.

“The story line is rich and provides the unexpected, as well as the transformative opportunity to see how powerful a random gift can be,” writes Wayne O’Brien of Montana Marketing.

Learn more at [randomgiftsofart.com](http://randomgiftsofart.com).

# Humanities Montana awards \$31,266 to Montana communities

Humanities Montana awarded \$31,266 to organizations and communities for programs focused on bringing the humanities to Montana citizens, from literary festivals to significant exhibits, lectures and films.

The following projects received funding:

- **“Colors of Confinement” Exhibit, City College, MSU Billings:** \$1,500 for a remarkable exhibit of 18 color Kodachrome photographs taken by Bill Manbo that document his internment at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming during WW II.
- **Carroll College Undergraduate Literary Festival, Carroll College, Helena:** \$1,500 for a student-led festival of readings, analytical discussions and literary analyses by students and members of the community.
- **“Seeds ‘n’ Stems: A Panel Discussion about Cannabis,” Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings:** \$1,500 for a panel of experts from diverse backgrounds – law enforcement, justice system, medical community,

education – to discuss the topic of cannabis in today’s culture in conjunction with the exhibition “The Botanical Series: Photographs by Gerald Lang and Jennifer Anne Tucker.”

- **2015 High Plains BookFest and Book Awards, Billings Cultural Partners, Billings:** \$1,500 for the annual celebration of contemporary literature, which includes four days of readings, panel discussions, workshops and an award banquet.
- **“Remembering the Rising: James E. Murray, Butte, and the Irish War of Independence,” The Friends of the Butte Archive:** \$1,100 for an interdisciplinary lecture and performance series on topics relating to Irish culture and history, as well as an exhibit on former resident Sen. James E. Murray. The series occurs in April with free events throughout Butte.
- **“Makoshika,” Fractured Media, LLC, Billings:** \$6,000 for a 50-minute documentary that examines

the effects of rapid development and collapse in small communities of eastern Montana and western North Dakota. Current residents describe what is happening now alongside stories of past booms and busts. The film premieres Feb. 15 at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival in Missoula.

- **“Kendra,” Orangebrooke Films, LLC, Missoula:** \$10,000 for a film that explores what makes a family, the importance of culture, and the reclaiming of Native identity through the story of actress Kendra Mylnechuk, an adoptee who has nearly no connection with her Native roots but who is placed in the ethnographic category of Native in her film roles.

- **“Survival Through Art,” Jan Thompson, Makanda, IL:** \$8,166 for a documentary about Montana artist and former prisoner-of-war Ben Steele.

- **Wonderlust Book Series, Bozeman:** \$1,000 for the monthly book discussion series.





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## NEA expands Military Healing Arts Partnership

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) recently announced the expansion of the NEA Military Healing Arts Partnership, its collaboration with the Department of Defense (DOD) to integrate art therapy into patient-centered health care at military facilities.

This effort began in 2011 at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Maryland and later expanded to Fort Belvoir in Virginia. Now it is growing its roster of professional art therapists in order to increase the amount of therapeutic writing, visual arts therapy and music therapy available.

The NEA Military Healing Arts Partnership supports the integrated healthcare model, in which creative arts therapists collaborate closely with a diverse team of healthcare professionals (such as physicians, neurologists, nurses, psychologists, physical therapists, and others) to share information and advance patient healing. Learn more at [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov).

# Tippet Rise

## Fishtail art center sets out to “make art happen in beautiful places”

By Jaci Webb  
Reprinted with permission  
from the *Billings Gazette*

Alban Bassuet ran in a circle, a large rubber mallet in each hand, banging away on a spinning steel circle overhead that was constructed by renowned sculptor Mark di Suvero.

Bassuet is not always this joyful, but after five years working with owners Cathy and Peter Halstead to turn 11,500 acres in Stillwater County into the Tippet Rise Art Center, the director is finally getting to show the place off.

Even though a blizzard was pelting the higher elevations of the property, which climb to 6,800 feet, Bassuet was enjoying the moment. The sculpture he was hammering is intended to be played like a twirling steel drum. After all, it’s called “Beethoven’s Quartet.”

“Mark tries to get to things that are beyond language,” Bassuet said.

The idea behind Tippet Rise is to “make art happen in beautiful places.” The art begins as soon as you enter the property with the unusual look of a curved fence.

“He wasn’t drunk when he built the fence, we asked him to put that beautiful curve in it,” Bassuet said.

When it opens to the public in June with a weekly concert series, Bassuet expects people to come from around the world to see this new “land art” space that pairs stunning landscape with equally magnificent art. After a dispute over 400 yards of county road was resolved a few weeks ago, Bassuet is looking forward to hiring 20 people to help run the ranch and its two music venues and to start getting the word out about Tippet Rise.

### Landscape surprises

Buses will transport guests to the property when concerts are held, and electric cars will be used on the property to escort the curious around the acreage where surprises pop out of the landscape every few miles.

The site is styled after a handful of places around the world that feature land art. They aim for a connection between the natural landscape and art. The Halsteads said they were most inspired by the Storm King Art Center in New Windsor, NY, which exhibits an extensive collection of international artists.

“We wanted to combine our ideas with the beauty of a specific place,” Cathy Halstead said in an email to *The Gazette*.

Sidney E. Frank, Cathy Halstead’s father, founded Grey Goose vodka, and Peter Halstead’s grandfather is chairman of Northern Westchester Hospital and a bank.

The Halsteads are artists. Cathy Halstead paints, and Peter Halstead is a musician, photographer and poet.

“Both our families have created places which to us were role models for what we wanted to do with our lives,” Peter Halstead

said. “They were buildings at universities, villages in India, estates given to education. They were prototypes for us.”

The couple chose Stillwater County for their land art center after visiting ranches in Hawaii, California and New England. The property includes five parcels, including the 3,000-acre Johnson Ranch, which was home to the late Montana artist Isabelle Johnson.

“We came to realize that we wanted rolling hills like Storm King, but also large grassy bowls where one sculpture could be the only presence,” Peter Halstead said.

### Music in Murphy Canyon

The couple owns enough land to keep true to that goal. “Beethoven’s Quartet” is miles from the nearest structure, sitting in the rolling hills above Murphy Canyon. Yet, it doesn’t feel jarring to come upon this huge steel work in rural Montana, where it is framed by nothing but sky. Thousands of miles away, di Suvero’s other works are on display at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

“Our motivation is to have sculpture that interacts with nature,” Bassuet said. “We see the curation of sculpture as important as the curation of music here.”

Part of the vision for Tippet Rise Art Center is to provide educational opportunities through internships for Montana college



Alban Bassuet is director of Tippet Rise Art Center. (Photo by Larry Mayer/*Billings Gazette*)

Before Dougherty arrived to twist local willows and sticks into curious shapes, Bassuet and the Halsteads hired JXM & Associates and CTA Architects to design and build a school in the style of a one-room prairie school house from the 1800s that sits just down the road from Tippet Rise.

Every detail is exact from the shingles blowing off the roof to expose the beams and the nails pushed up from wind and weather. If it weren’t for the new concrete foundation, you would guess that the school has been there for 100 years.

The willows and sticks drape the exterior and weave through the interior of the building. Somebody commented that the work looks like something from a Tim Burton movie. Others refer to it as the house from the “Wizard of Oz.”

Bassuet explained that when Dougherty arrived on the property with his son and an assistant, he leaned on the inside wall of the school house and thought back to his days as a youngster day dreaming in school. The willows take on an almost-human appearance, leaning into the old chalkboard with gaping holes that resemble eyes.

Like the new schoolhouse built to look old, the Olivier Barn, a concert venue that will seat up to 220 people, is being built to look like a an old barn with a faded red exterior. It was designed by architect Laura Viklund, of Gunnstock Timber Frames, out of Powell, Wyo.

Lindsey Hinmon points out that from the barn, you can see four mountain ranges.

General contractor Jeff Engel of Billings, said the project to build a state-of-the-art concert venue disguised as an old barn has been “unbelievable.”

“The attention to detail and the quality of this project is just amazing. There is nothing in this building that is standard. It’s not just the sticks and the boards, it’s the people working on this job.”

Fridays are the workers’ favorite days because a local chef brings up a catered hot lunch for all to “keep morale up,” Lindsey Hinmon said.

The project involves 30 subcontractors and 150 people, including engineers who designed 15 miles of new roads, geo-thermal and solar energy features, and an operation to harvest the rain and snow from the land.

For those itching to get a peek at this massive undertaking, a summer concert series will be announced in January. The series is being organized by National Public Radio host and internationally acclaimed pianist Christopher O’Riley, who is a friend of the Halsteads.

O’Riley has already performed a private concert at Tippet Rise on one of the three Steinways on the property, calling the pianos “the finest Steinways I’ve ever played.”

A recording studio is part of the Olivier Barn where plans are to record the concerts for podcasts to be available worldwide.

For the price of a \$10 ticket, guests can see chamber ensembles or classical solo artists. But beyond the music, curiosity seekers may just want to experience the fascinating dichotomy of a rustic Montana ranch hosting world-renowned visual artists and musicians.



Patrick Dougherty’s willow-wrapped sculpture “Daydreams” is among the works at Tippet Rise. (Photo by Larry Mayer/*Billings Gazette*)

students and hands-on workshops for area students.

Lindsey Hinmon, who works with her husband Pete as education coordinator and operations managers, is working with teachers from Nye, Fishtail, Absarokee, Columbus and Red Lodge to arrange field trips for their students when the sculptors are on site.

Another di Suvero piece, “Proverb,” was previously on display in Dallas, where it was nicknamed “The Keys to Dallas.” Now, it’s sitting in the bottom of Box Canyon where sheep and cattle graze in the summertime.

The di Suvero works are part of a half-dozen land-specific sculptures at Tippet Rise. A guide is required to get visitors from one sculpture site to the next.

### Casting the hills

On a hill overlooking a bowl on the property, which contains seven canyons, three Spanish sculptors who are part of the Ensamble Studio, are experimenting with concrete forms cast in the ground so they replicate the landscape. Absarokee concrete contractor Rich Davis was hired to assist with the project, which will include three large pieces. Hiring locals and buying locally produced construction materials were priorities for the Halsteads.

“It’s great out here,” Davis said of the area. “I love it.”

One of the most unusual landscape pieces is “Daydreams,” a site-specific work by internationally known environmental artist Patrick Dougherty.



Cliffs frame “Proverb,” a 60-foot sculpture by Mark di Suvero. (Photo by Larry Mayer/*Billings Gazette*)



# LAW AND THE ART WORLD

## Artists need to know what's going on in the art world

By Bill Frazier ©2015

I love to hear from readers and hear their questions about what they read and hear about in the art world. This article is prompted by the questions of several faithful readers of this column. One art-dealer client and friend visited my office and showed me a copy of my article that appeared here back in 2010. He requested that I reprint one passage from the article which he felt offered important advice to his artists and others, as well.

So, here it is, and having been involved with an art gallery and many artists, I re-emphasize these comments:

"This is a professional suggestion, and a rather insistent one, for artists. You must visit art galleries and not just the ones which display your work. At recent presentations, I raised the question to the artists of how many attended art-show openings and visited art galleries. Only about 10 percent of the participants in the seminars had done so, and even fewer had attended any type of professional workshops in the last year. I wish I had asked how many actually read art magazines.

"I bring this up not to criticize but to raise awareness and encourage artists to find out what is going on in the art world and beyond their immediate studios. Artists need to know what others are doing, how work is framed and displayed, what is selling, which artists and galleries are successful and why, and what legal protections are available.

"While this may seem mercenary in an otherwise benign and cultural occupation, remember that you are doing this to make a living and you have to sell artwork for money to make that living."

### Museum rights

The issue of museum rights to art owned or displayed in a museum has arisen once again. An artist wishes to use a museum painting for reference or study, or a writer wishes to use an image for illustration in his book. There is not a copyright issue, but the museum requires a fee for the use of the image.

Here is the problem: The artwork may be in the public domain, which means anyone has the right to use it, but since the museum owns it and has possession of it, there is no requirement that the museum provide access to it for copying or reference, hence, the museum is

legally entitled to charge a fee. This is so even if there is no copyright on the image.

This is strictly a matter of ownership and possession, whether copyrighted or public domain. The museum receives the same rights that the original owner had in the work. If there is a copyright on the work, it can pass to the museum. If there is no copyright, the physical possession of the work belongs to the museum and it can charge a fee for use of the image or not, according to its policy.

If the work is in the public domain – for example there is no copyright or a copyright has expired – anyone may make a copy of the image, but, again, the museum is not required to grant access for a copy.

### Charitable deductions

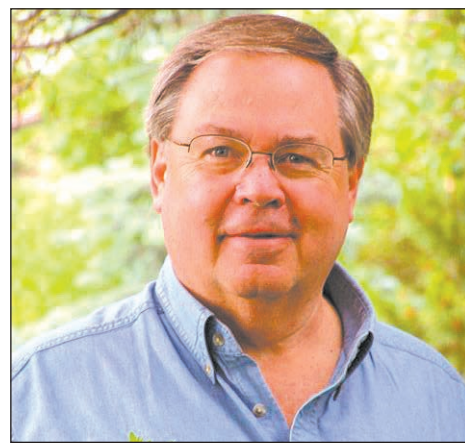
The invitations for charitable auctions, silent auctions and such are beginning to arrive and I am getting calls about how much of the purchase price can be deducted as a charitable donation. I have discussed this issue in this column often but many people think that if they buy something from a charity (nonprofit and tax exempt) they can deduct the purchase price as a charitable deduction. No.

The purchase of artwork from a charitable organization's sale or auction does not make the purchase price tax deductible as a charitable donation. This is not a donation. The buyer is buying a painting or sculpture just as he would at a gallery downtown. The buyer pays money and receives the artwork in return, so there is no gift or donation.

Similarly, if a buyer's premium is charged at an auction, it is not deductible because it is a required part of the purchase price and not a willing or voluntary donation.

The whole issue of charitable giving and art can be tricky, so be sure to seek sound professional advice before committing large sums of money. Remember, as long as a buyer is receiving something of value in return for his purchase price, or whatever else the payment is called, there is no donation. This is the law regardless of what the emcee, sponsor or auctioneer says.

Here is another common scenario for fundraising, often conducted by sculptors, that does not pass IRS scrutiny. A local organization or community commissions a statue of its local war hero, rodeo performer, movie star



Bill Frazier

or beloved coach, and solicits donations to pay the artist and foundry.

In return, each donor is to receive a gallery or table-size limited edition version of the statue. The IRS will argue that there is no charitable deduction because the donor has received a valuable item in return for the donation, that is to say, a sculpture for the payment.

Sculptors and organizations continue to market this concept, but attempting to take such a charitable deduction is not lawful and may generate an audit of an otherwise clean tax return.

### And the scams continue ...

Continue to be vigilant for internet and telephone scams. Many sound credible, but you must exercise good judgment.

A new variation is that you will get a call from a collector's "agent," who wishes to buy your artwork. It sounds good until what turns out to be a counterfeit check arrives which inadvertently pays \$2000 more than the purchase price.

The agent asks you to return the extra money immediately or he will get in trouble, or some similar sob story. You know: just wire back the overage and it will save having to write or wait for another check. However, you later discover from your bank that the check is counterfeit, even if it is a cashier's check. Any variation on this scheme is probably a scam, so act with care.

**Bill Frazier served a lengthy and invaluable tenure as chairman of the Montana Arts Council. He can be reached at [artlaw@itstriangle.com](mailto:artlaw@itstriangle.com). MAC thanks *Art of the West* for permission to reprint this series.**



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## Nonprofits must reapply for property-tax exemption

The Montana Department of Revenue is alerting nonprofit organizations and other tax-exempt property owners that they need to reapply for property-tax exemption.

A new state law requires owners of tax-exempt real property in exempt status before 2014 to submit an application by March 1, 2016. About 10,000 tax-exempt properties in Montana are affected.

The reapplication requirement includes property owned by most nonprofit organizations, private schools and colleges, churches, parsonages, low-income housing, veterans' clubhouses, community service and fraternal organizations, cemeteries and land leased from a railroad by a nonprofit organization.

The application, AB-30R, can be downloaded at [www.revenue.mt.gov](http://www.revenue.mt.gov).

Organizations must submit an application and fee for each parcel owned, but only one set of supporting documentation. All organizations need to submit their IRS Form 990 so that the Department of Revenue can confirm gross receipts.

For more information, visit [www.revenue.mt.gov](http://www.revenue.mt.gov) or call 888-859-2254.

## Tech Talk: How to block ads on websites

By Mark Ratledge

If auto-play videos on websites are annoying (which I covered last issue), advertisements on websites – in general – can get that way, too. When ads are flashy and animated, they are distracting, and sometimes a site is so loaded with ads the whole page loads slowly. And on mobile devices, ads can overwhelm the content.

So you want to block ads on websites, so you only see the content? Try Adblock Plus: [adblockplus.org](http://adblockplus.org). Adblock Plus calls itself "an open source, community-driven project aimed at making the internet better for everyone." This browser add-on allows users to block display ads – graphics, Flash ads, etc. – from the site they are visiting. There is a mobile version, too.

Adblock works by detecting the format of ads, the location they are loaded from, and even uses a list – retrieved from Adblock Plus – that determines what to block. Install it, check the settings, and block those ads. You might be amazed at the "cleanliness" of your favorite websites when they are presented without ads.

When using Adblock Plus, you may be

surprised to see a notice in place of an ad on a website that says something like, "We see you are using an ad blocker ..." It's easy enough for the website to detect.

And it's something to consider, too. The problem is that many sites need ad revenue to survive; it's a hard truth about ads and being a business on the internet. Within Adblock Plus, you can disable ad blocking on any site by whitelisting them, so at least you see the ads, and the website records an ad impression for the website owner.

And who knows? Maybe you'll click on the ad, if it's something you are interested in. It's one way to find out about a show or an item that you may have missed reading about. I've whitelisted some sites I read daily because the ads are not intrusive, and the ad content complements the site content.

Now, to be honest, Adblock Plus has made something of a deal with the devil: they allow



Mark Ratledge is a WordPress consultant. Check his website at [markratledge.com](http://markratledge.com).

some ads – which they call "acceptable ads" – through their filters anyway. You can read about that at [adblockplus.org/en/acceptable-ads](http://adblockplus.org/en/acceptable-ads).

The justification is that some sites do rely on advertising for revenue, and the makers of Adblock Plus want to encourage advertisers to produce better and less intrusive ads. Adblock Plus says that about 75% of their users accept some kinds of advertising to help websites.

But, you can disable the "acceptable ad" setting, too, and block all ads no matter what. The makers of Adblock Plus ask you not to do that, but you can. I kept the settings, so I see acceptable ads, and I have whitelisted many popular sites, so I see their ads, too. It's hard to be a publisher on the web, and ad revenue makes a difference.





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## Statewide arts service organizations

Montana has many arts-discipline-specific statewide service organizations. You can find a complete list here: [art.mt.gov/resources/resources\\_statewides.asp](http://art.mt.gov/resources/resources_statewides.asp).

## Montana Arts Council Programs

Visit the Montana Arts Council's website for a complete listing of our programs:

Arts Organizations: [art.mt.gov/orgs/orgs.asp](http://art.mt.gov/orgs/orgs.asp)

Artists: [art.mt.gov/artists/artists.asp](http://art.mt.gov/artists/artists.asp)

Folklife: [art.mt.gov/folklife/folklife.asp](http://art.mt.gov/folklife/folklife.asp)

Arts Education: [art.mt.gov/schools/schools.asp](http://art.mt.gov/schools/schools.asp)



**Alberta Bair Theater:** Enthusiastic audience members give “Ballroom with a Twist” dancers a standing ovation during the January 2014 performance at the Alberta Bair. (Photo by Jody Grant)

# PUBLIC VALUE PARTNERSHIPS

## The Three Rs at work in Montana

Public Value Partnership grants between Montana nonprofit arts organizations and the Montana Arts Council champion the fact that the arts are of benefit to all the citizens of Montana and are worthy of state and federal investment.

Public Value Partnerships utilize three tools we call “The Three Rs” to expand the public value of the work being done by Montana’s non-profit arts organizations:

- Building relationships;
- Creating greater relevance and meaning; and
- Establishing return on investment (measured both as economic vitality and impact on people’s lives).

MAC believes that using “The Three Rs” strengthens participation, understanding and support from audiences, donors and funders. We’d like to share some of the best examples of these stories with you from 2014:

### Building Relationships

**Glacier Symphony and Chorale, Kalispell:** The GSC is working to develop “systems” that stress the importance of developing relationships with our audience and supporters. We recognize that in many cases, we treat all donors the same, yet some have been giving to the organization and purchasing season tickets for more than 20 years. They get the same thank you as a one-time visitor who makes a gift of a similar size, yet does not have the history with the GSC.

The GSC already has a system in place that defines recognition strategies and activities for different levels of major donors. We intend to build on this and expand ways in which we interact with our donors to foster two-way communication. We already work to have social interactions with donors so that they can speak freely without being worried about being asked for more money.

We want to institute “Think Tanks” which would be focus groups where a variety of donors and supporters would be invited to have a meal or social time with the GSC and a guided discussion would take place around a specific topic. The results would be used to help guide our planning process, and the intention is that by allowing those supporters to speak out and participate in our planning process, that they would feel some ownership and closer to the GSC.

Another change that the GSC is instituting to foster relationships with the businesses in our community is to change the committee name from “Corporate Sponsorship” to “Business Partnership.” Not only does the name sound more encouraging and engaging, but the environment surrounding those relationships will be encouraged to change also.

Over time, a joint long-range plan surrounding the “Business Partnership” with the GSC will be proposed and jointly developed by the two organizations. Our hope is that it will cement longer-term relationships (and monetary support) and will more closely align our business partners with what

we are trying to accomplish while helping them accomplish their internal business goals.

This process has started with one of our trade partnerships with the Crown Guitar Festival. Their founder, David Feffer, wrote the following in a letter to the editor of the *Daily Inter Lake* on May 16, 2014 (excerpted): “Anyone who did not attend this past weekend’s performance by the GSC ... missed something quite extraordinary. It was world class and the entire community can be proud of, and celebrate ... Regardless of the type of music you enjoy, what they have created is something special and we can all appreciate excellence ... I closed my eyes and was transported to beautiful and thrilling places. It was both grand and sublime.”

The enjoyment and thrill that he is experiencing is a direct result of the close relationship that is being developed with the Crown Guitar Festival, including traded sponsorships of the two organizations, and interactions with their staff. David and his wife Judy have also become major donors to the GSC on a personal basis.

### Creating Relevance

**Montana Ballet Company, Bozeman:** In 2014, MBC launched a new program called Discover Dance which meaningfully engages the community by effectively partnering with the Bozeman public school system. The company’s artistic director works with school leadership at the elementary level, providing common-core aligned curriculum materials for teachers to use in the classroom in advance of a live performance.

The content-rich study guides cover classical ballet history, ballet technique, the nar-



**Montana Ballet Company:** Children from local elementary schools engage in movement exercises with MBC dancers during a Discover Dance performance of “Carnival of the Animals” in February 2014. (Photo by Montana Ballet Company staff)

rative roots of the ballet at hand, and specific guidance on theater etiquette. Following the performance and back in the classroom, students reflect interactively on their learning by creating other work such as poetry or visual art, to more fully integrate their experience.

For some students, it will be a notable first encounter with live arts. For others, our invitation to reflect on ballet through the lens of another creative art form will more deeply anchor a multidisciplinary perspective that all students deserve to explore and develop.

Our premiere Discover Dance Program was held in conjunction with “Carnival of the Animals” in February 2014. More than 500 kindergarten-through-second grade students attended, representing the breadth of the district’s elementary schools.

Another relevant approach toward audience building bears mentioning. MBC invites everyone who auditions for a role in our annual “Nutcracker” performance to participate in the production. Everyone who auditions shares the stage with world-class artists. This is a level of direct community involvement that is rare for the art form and completely unique to Bozeman.

In speaking with an adult cast member who took part in the first-act party scene from “Nutcracker,” it was moving to hear of her



**Glacier Symphony and Chorale:** Maestro John Zoltek performs at a “Jazz with the Maestro” event in the spring of 2014 in Kalispell. The event exposed the GSC to a new potential audience, while showing a different side of the maestro’s talents. (Photo by Brenda Ahearn)

childhood dreams to become a ballerina, which she was not able to pursue because of financial reasons. She was provided the opportunity to live out this dream at the age of 75 through Montana Ballet. She is one of MBC’s most ardent supporters because of this deeply enriching experience.

Children and young adults are offered a unique and life-changing experience of performing on the stage with a live orchestra and renowned dancers. It is amazing to witness young dancers who work with confidence in front of large audiences. They are learning vital life skills of overcoming physical and mental obstacles, cooperating with others, and moving with grace on the stage and in the world.

MBC also hosts a Tea with Clara two weeks in advance of the “Nutcracker.” In 2013, we once again had 300 children and parents attend the event, where children were afforded the opportunity to meet MBC company dancers, watch short vignettes from the performance, and dance with them on stage.

### Return on Investment

**Alberta Bair Theater, Billings:** Study after study is proving that live performing arts in a community is good news for those whose daily task is to strengthen the economy and enrich quality of life. No longer do business and elected leaders need to choose between arts and economic prosperity. Nationally, as well as locally, the arts mean business! It is estimated that nearly 60% of the Alberta Bair Theater’s \$1.5-million budget is spent locally.

When there is a performance at ABT, all of downtown Billings bustles. People are looking for places to park, stores stay open late, and restaurants are packed with customers. The business day is extended and the cash registers are ringing.

Last year, ABT utilized \$30,600 worth of local hotel rooms for housing artists. Eight percent of our ticket buyers (7,176) reside outside Yellowstone and surrounding counties. We estimate that 50% of those required at least one night of hotel accommodation.

With an average of two people per room, this adds up to 1,794 hotel rooms utilized by attendees. With an average price of \$75 that amounts to \$134,550 in hotel rooms. These amounts do not include rooms rented directly by the performers.

And it is not just retailers who are feeling the benefits the arts have on a community. The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation in Seattle has provided major funding for several ABT projects. Paul Allen, philanthropist and co-founder of Microsoft, is a staunch supporter of the arts because he has experienced firsthand the positive impact they have on a community.

“In my own philanthropy and business endeavors” Allen said, “I have seen the critical role that the arts play in stimulating creativity and in developing vital communities. The arts have a crucial impact on our economy and are an important catalyst for learning, discovery and achievement in our country.”



## PERCENT FOR ART

# Montana Arts Council's Percent-for-Art program

The Percent-for-Art program, administered by the Montana Arts Council, announced the finalists for 2015, whose works were recently installed at the following sites:

**MSU – Animal Biosciences, Bozeman**  
**Jennifer Pulchinski**, “The Nesting Place,” exterior metal sculpture

**MSU Gaines Hall, Bozeman**  
**Michele Gultlove**, “Epiphany,” mobile of dichroic glass sculptures  
**Tracy Lynn Pristas**, “Whispered Assignment,” oil painting  
**Willem Volkersz**, “Home on the Range,” mixed media – neon, wood, paint

**UM– Chemistry, Missoula**  
 Finalists, soon to be installed:  
**Steven Akre**, “Glacier Lily and Paintbrush,” photography  
**Pamela Caughey**, “Chem 101” and “Osmosis,” encaustic  
**Nicolas Gadbois**, “Nocturne 49,” mixed media on steel  
**Barbara Michelman**, “Pure Water #4” and “Pure Water #5,” photography  
**Rosella Mosteller**, “A Day to Remember,” photography  
**Alison Reintjes**, “Shimmer,” wall-mounted sculptural ceramics  
**Cheryl Safren**, “Interior Landscape,” chemistry on copper

**UM – Law, Missoula**  
 Finalists, soon to be installed:  
**Annie Bailey**, “Hi-Line Horizon,” digital photography  
**Laura Blaker**, “Greenough Morning II,” “River Trail,” “Little Cottage,” “Bonner Park,” acrylics on canvas  
**Alan McNiell**, “Swede’s Corner: Drummond, Montana,” oil on canvas over panel  
**Tracy Lynn Pristas**, “Awakened Council,” oil on canvas over panel  
**Barb Schwartz Karst**, “Gambler’s Gold,” oil on canvas  
 View all of the artworks at [art.mt.gov/grants/Percent-for-Art-Gallery.pdf](http://art.mt.gov/grants/Percent-for-Art-Gallery.pdf).



# 19



**MSU Gaines Hall, Bozeman:** “Home on the Range” by Willem Volkerz



**MSU Gaines Hall, Bozeman:** “Epiphany” by Michele Gultlove (Photo by Zev Hoover)



**MSU Animal Biosciences, Bozeman:** “A Nesting Place” by Jennifer Pulchinski



**MSU Gaines Hall, Bozeman:** “Whispered Assignment” by Tracy Lynn Prista

## Future Cultural Trust Grants

The FY18-19 Cultural Trust grants will be available online Spring 2016 with a deadline of Aug. 1, 2016.

## Strategic Investment Grants

Funding is currently available for grants of up to \$1,000 for nonprofit arts organizations, artists and arts educators. Deadlines are monthly.

For more information see [art.mt.gov/orgs/orgs\\_sig.asp](http://art.mt.gov/orgs/orgs_sig.asp) or contact Kristin Han Burgoyne at [kburgoyne@mt.gov](mailto:kburgoyne@mt.gov) or 406-444-6449.

# Montana arts presenters earn TourWest grants

TourWest is a competitive grant program of the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) that provides subsidies to arts and community organizations for the presentation of out-of-state touring performers and literary artists. Thirteen Montana arts organizations have been awarded a total of 19 grants in this year’s round of funding. Each project funded will include at least one public performance and one outreach activity in the local schools or community.

Montana arts organizations traditionally perform well in this grant competition because of their strong commitment to artistic quality, collaboration, audience development and the presentation of diverse art forms. The following arts presenters have received support for their upcoming performing arts seasons:

- **Alberta Bair Theater, Billings:** \$2,000 for the Lula Washington Dance Theatre; \$2,125 for the Kronos Quartet
- **Alpine Artisans, Seeley Lake:** \$1,000 for Queen Nur
- **Arts Without Boundaries, Billings:** \$1,400 for Wayne Horvitz
- **Chouteau County Performing Arts, Fort Benton:** \$1,615 for Tom Rigney and Flambeau

- **Electric Peak Arts Council, Gardiner:** \$850 for Jonathan Kingham
- **Great Falls Symphony Association, Great Falls:** \$2,125, Eugene Ballet
- **Kootenai Heritage Council, Libby:** \$1,400 for the Valinor Quartet; \$1,920 for Norman Foote
- **Mineral County Performing Arts Council, Superior:** \$1,500 for the Valinor Quartet
- **Myrna Loy Center, Helena:** \$1,620 for Joshua Walters
- **Northeastern Arts Network, Sidney:** \$2,375 for the The Valinor Quartet; \$2,125 for Jonathan Kingham
- **Southwest Montana Arts Council, Dillon:** \$720 for Queen Nur; \$1,700 for Jonathan Kingham
- **Sunburst Community Service Foundation, Eureka:** \$1,500 for the Valinor Quartet; \$1,600 for Queen Nur
- **Whitefish Theatre Co., Whitefish:** \$2,500 for DakhaBrakha; and \$1,450 for Andy Hackbarth

Learn more about TourWest grants at [www.westaf.org](http://www.westaf.org).



- 1 Major MAC Transitions; Poet Laureate Michael Earl Craig; Governor’s Arts Award Nominations; Wilma Reborn; VIBE Dance Competition
- 2 Arni’s Addendum; NEA’s 50th Celebration; Poet Laureate (cont)
- 3-4 Congrats; Condolences
- 5 VIBE (cont); Full Circle Moment; Carolyn Valacich Retires
- 6 Kindness, Education and the Arts; Poetry Out Loud Finals; AISC Registry and Grant Cycle
- 7 Tippet Rise Residency; Native News; City Indian
- 8 Wilma Reborn (cont)
- 9-11 About Music; About Books
- 12 MAM Auction; YAM Auction; Paintings Consigned to Russell; Western Art Week
- 13 About Visual Artists
- 14 MAP Celebration of Art
- 15 Film Clips; Random Gifts of Art; Humanities Montana Grants
- 16 Tippet Rise: Art in Beautiful Places
- 17 Law and the Art World; Tech Talk
- 18-19 Public Value Partnerships; Percent-for-Art Projects; TourWest Grants



STATE OF THE

Arts



**Tippet Rise: “Beethoven’s Quartet”**  
Tippet Rise Art Center director Alban Bassuet uses rubber mallets to ring the 30-by-24 foot Mark di Suvero sculpture “Beethoven’s Quartet” in the Beartooth foothills near Fishtail. Read more about the remarkable undertaking on pages 7 and 16. (Photo by Larry Mayer/Billings Gazette)

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State of Montana programs  
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January/February/  
March 2016